

The Mutiny Act is very distinct on this matter: 'On the first and on every subsequent conviction for desertion, the court-martial, in addition to any other punishment, may order the offender to be marked on the left side, two inches below the armpit, with the letter D, such letter not to be less than an inch long, and to be marked upon the skin with some ink or gunpowder, or other preparation, so as to be visible and conspicuous, and not liable to be obliterated.' The law mercifully puts the brand where ordinary clothing effectually conceals it; but the ominous D is there, nevertheless, to be appealed to as a test of identity in case of further infractions of the law. Irrespective of any idea of punishment, many sailors and soldiers have a taste for marking or tattooing, each one selecting such a device as may best please him. The mark becomes a sort of baptismal register, a sign by which relations and friends may identify him in case of need. This is usually done by pricking the skin with a needle, in as many spots as will form a letter or other device, and immediately rubbing in gunpowder finely pulverised; the part is held near the fire, and heat does the rest. One description states that the powder actually explodes, and drives an indelible mark into each puncture; but be this as it may, some stain or other, pulverescent or liquid, enters the punctures, and remains permanent.

We come next to real tattooing, a subject concerning which the available information is curious and interesting.

A doubt has arisen whether tattoo of the skin has anything to do with tattoo of a drum; but nothing further can be obtained than a similarity in the sound or spelling of the word, or both. The word tattoo, as applied to a peculiar kind of drum-beating, does not seem to belong to the French or to any other language derived from the Latin; it is of Teutonic origin. Sir James Turner, in his *Pallas Armada*, a treatise on military affairs (published about a century and a half ago), spells the word *taptoo*, and explains it as the signal for closing the sutlers' canteens in garrisons and camps. The original is supposed to have been the Dutch *taptoe*—tap signifying, as with us, either a spigot or an alehouse; and *taptoe* being equivalent to the closing of the spigot or tap. The Germans speak of *kappenstreich*, the knocking or striking of the spigot into a cask; and there seems reason to believe that this was the origin of the *taptoe* or tattoo series of words—tapping a cask and tapping a drum. The nations of Southern Europe which derived their languages from the Latin express the beat of the drum by many curious combinations of the syllables *rat*, *tat*, *tan*, *tar*, and one or two others, such as *rat-plan*, *tan-tan*, *tar-a-pat-a-pan*, *ta-rap-a-tan*, *para-pata-pan*, *pata-pata-pan*, *tap-a-rap-a-tan*, *tap-a-tan*, *tap-pa-tar*, and the like. Everything tends to shew that it was quite an accidental similarity which the South Sea voyagers found to exist between two words—the native name for the puncturing of the skin, and the north European name for the tap of a drum. True, one learned man tells us that *ta* is the root of a whole series of words denoting to strike or to knock, in some of the Polynesian languages; but, on the other hand, tattooing is designated by a wholly different word in some of the islands where it is adopted—as we shall presently see.

When tattooing was first practised, is a doubtful

question; but it can at anyrate be traced up to remote times. In some of the tombs near Thebes, there are painted walls representing a white race of men tattooed and clothed in skins. These are supposed to have been Thracian Europeans. Caesar, in his *Commentaries*, speaks of the Britons as being tattooed; they were unquestionably stained, and not unlikely in ornate patterns.

Recent travellers do not pay much attention to tattoo-marks on the persons of natives in rude or barbarous countries; but in the earlier narratives, frequently descriptions of this matter are given. In Bosman's *Description of the Coast of Guinea*, published in Dutch, and republished in an English form about the beginning of the last century, the author notices the tattooing of some of the west Africans. He was Chief Factor for the Dutch at the fort of St George d'Elmina—the very fort, by the way, which is just now bringing us into trouble with his barbaric Ashantee majesty. Bosman says: 'They make small incisions all over the bodies of the infants, in a sort of regular manner, expressing some figure thereby; but the females are more adorned with these ornaments than the males, and each at pleasure of their parents. You may easily guess that this mangling of the bodies of those tender creatures must be very painful; but as it is the fashion here, and is thought very ornamental, it is practised by everybody.' The tattooing instrument appears to be a sort of cross between a small hoe and a saw, or a hoe jagged at its sharp edge with saw-teeth. The blade is often made of a bone or shell, scraped very thin, varying from a quarter of an inch to an inch and a half in width, and having from three to twenty teeth cut in it. A black paint or stain is made, derived from the soot or charcoal of a particular kind of wood, liquefied with water or oil. The teeth of the tattooing instrument, when dipped into this paint, are placed upon the skin; and a handle to which it is attached, receives smart rapid blows from a stick or thin wooden mallet suitable for the purpose. The teeth pierce the skin, and carry with them the black paint, which leaves a permanent stain.

Captain Cook, in his first voyage to the South Seas, collected the materials for that admirable account of the Otaheiteans which finds its place among the classics of 'Discovery' narratives, and which tempts us so often to compare the Tahiti of our day with the Otaheite of a century ago. He did not fail to notice the corporeal adornments of the natives. 'They stain their bodies by indenting or pricking the flesh with a small instrument made of bone, cut into short teeth; which indentings they fill up with a dark-blue or blackish mixture, prepared from the smoke of an oily nut, burned by them instead of candles, and water. This operation, which is called by the natives *tattooing*, is exceedingly painful, and leaves an indelible mark on the skin. It is usually performed when they are about ten or twelve years of age, and on different parts of the body.' The greatest pain, he states, results from the tattooing on the lower parts of the body, from which the decoration proceeds high up in a series of crescents or arches. Mr (afterwards Sir Joseph) Banks, who accompanied Captain Cook on this memorable voyage, was on one occasion present at the tattooing of an Otaheitean girl about twelve years of age. She lay on her face. The process was performed with 'an instrument that

had twenty teeth; and at each stroke, which was repeated every moment, serum, mixed with blood, issued. She bore it with great resolution for several minutes; but at length the pain became so violent that she murmured and complained, and then burst into most violent lamentations. But her operator was inexorable; while some females present chid, and even beat her. Mr Banks witnessed this operation for about an hour; but the more artistic adornment was still to be performed.

Cook, in his second voyage, visited the isle of Amsterdam, where he found the men tattooed from the hip to the middle of the thigh; but the women had these adornments on the arms and fingers, and only in a slight degree. Many women in other South Sea islands were tattooed in the form of a Z on every joint of their fingers and toes, and frequently on the outside of the feet. Other devices were squares, crescents, circles, men, dogs, birds, &c. Some of the old men had the greater part of their bodies covered with large patches of black, deeply indented at the edges, like a rude imitation of flame. Some of the tattooing was checker-wise, straight lines crossing at right angles. In a few singular instances, the women had only the tip of the tongue tattooed. In the Carolino Isles, tattooing was regarded as a religious ceremony, to be performed under favourable auspices. The officiating priest invoked a blessing from the gods on the family of the patient. If a gentle breeze arose, it was accepted as the approving voice of the gods, and the operation proceeded; if not, it was suspended; for any tattooing under the anger of the gods would have led to the submerging of the islands by a raging storm.

New Zealand is the country of which we have most knowledge in regard to the practice of tattooing; owing to the number of travellers who have described it. John Rutherford, a seaman engaged on a South Sea voyage, was captured on the northern of the two islands in 1816, and kept prisoner by the natives for several years. They treated him kindly on the whole, and conformed on him the honour of tattooing, which ceremony he described in the published record of his adventures. Laid on his back, amid a group of natives, he underwent the ordeal on his body, arms, and face. Several tools were employed, some with teeth, and some without; varied in size and shape to fit different parts. The operation lasted four hours; during which the chief's daughters wiped the blood from his face with a bunch of dried flax. Then they washed him at a neighbouring stream, dried him before a fire, and gave him his garments one by one, except his shirt, which one of the ladies put on her own person, wearing it hind-side before. So severe had been the scalding, that he lost his sight for three days, and did not fully recover for six weeks. The frontispiece to his volume represents him adorned with a most elaborate tattoo of devices; while another engraved plate gives fac-similes of various kinds of tattooing instruments employed.

The best and fullest account of this subject was given by Mr Earle, who resided nine years in New Zealand, shortly before the first settlers ventured there from England. In his work, published in 1829, an engraving is given, representing a New Zealand chief lying in an easy position on a kind of blanket, and an artistic tattooer operating upon him. He says: 'The art of tattooing has been

brought to such perfection here, that whenever we have seen a New Zealander with skin thus ornamented, we have admired him. It is looked upon as answering the same purposes as clothes. When a chief throws off his mats, he seems as proud of displaying the beautiful ornaments figured on his skin as a first-rate exquisite is in exhibiting himself in his last fashionable attire. It is an essential part of warlike preparation. The whole of the district of Ko-ro-ra-di-Ka was preparing for the approaching war. Their cannon, muskets, powder, and ball increased daily; and a very ingenious artist, named Aranghie, arrived to carry on this important branch of his art, which was soon placed in requisition; for all the mighty men in the neighbourhood were one by one under his operating hands. As this professor was a near neighbour of mine, I frequently paid him a visit in his studio; and he returned the compliment whenever he had time to spare. He was considered by his countrymen a perfect master of the art of tattooing; and men of the highest rank and importance were in the habit of travelling long journeys in order to put their skins under his skillful hands. Indeed, so largely were his works esteemed, that I have seen many of his drawings exhibited even after death. A neighbour of mine very lately killed a chief who had been tattooed by Aranghie, and, appreciating the artist's work so highly, he skinned the chieftain's thighs, and covered his cartouch-box with it! I was astonished to see with what boldness and precision Aranghie drew his designs upon the skin, and what beautiful ornaments he produced; no rule and compasses could be more correct than the lines and circles he formed. So unrivalled is he in his profession, that a highly finished face of a chief from the hands of this artist is as greatly prized in New Zealand as a head from the hands of Sir Thomas Lawrence is amongst us. This professor was merely a *cooky*, or slave; but by skill and industry he raised himself to an equality with the greatest men of his country; and as every chief who employed him always made him some handsome present, he soon became a man of wealth, and was constantly surrounded by important personages.'

We thus learn from Mr Earle that tattooing is veritably a branch of the fine arts, in the estimation of those who are most concerned in the matter; and even the Englishman himself was roused to enthusiasm in the matter. The Church Missionary Society have in their museum a bust of a chieftain, carved by himself in very hard wood, with rude iron tools of his own making, and the tattoo-marks on his face are faithfully copied. Unusually complex devices are said to require weeks, or even months, in their execution; seeing that some portions of the skin must be heated before others are proceeded with. From various authorities we learn that among these savage tribes tattooing is the mark of gentility, and is as much prized as is the exhibition of coats of arms by many families in England. A traveller, Mr Marsden, ventured to tell one of the New Zealand chiefs that it would be a pity to tattoo his nephew Rocoow, as he was a fine-looking youth, with a dignified, open, and placid countenance, which ought not to be disfigured. What was the reply? 'The chief laughed in my face, and said his nephew *must* be tattooed, as it would give him a noble, masculine, and warlike appearance; that he would not be

fitted to be his successor with a smooth face ; and that the New Zealanders would look on him merely as a woman if he was not tattooed.'

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN SHOPPING.

DEVELOPMENT is the order of the day. Everything is developing into something else, not even excepting animal life, although, by the way, that is very much a matter of talk, for nobody ever exactly sees one kind of animal turning into another, and people have to take it on trust. Of all the developments which we are quite sure about, none is so conspicuous, or on so grand a scale, as the development of shop-windows. Where it is all to end, we may shrewdly conjecture; making up our mind in the meanwhile to this, that the prodigious sums lavished in making shops attractive, must be compensated somehow by corresponding sums drawn from the pockets of purchasers; if not, so much the worse for those who speculate on giving a specially superfine look to their establishments.

In walking along the street, one naturally asks at himself the question, why tradesmen should make such enormously expensive efforts to outdo each other in magnificence. As a matter of social economics, if it pay to do so in some cases, the gain does not fall the less heavily on the public. The requirements of the community are a fixed quantity. People do not drink tea, or wear hats, in proportion to the number and extent of large plate-glass windows. They can afford to buy so much of this or that, and, as a rule, the more they get for their money, the more they have to spare for something else. The costly embellishment of the place where a thing is sold accordingly means limitation of purchase—a species of general conspiracy to make articles dear and difficult of acquisition. Without actually speculating on the future of the shop-embellishment mania, we can see that it is in course of counteraction by a development of a different kind—what we might term a retro-development, a going back to simplicity in trading. Looking at the splendours which invite attention, the world as much as says: 'We can stand this no longer. What do we care for your polished mahogany counters, your brilliant plate-glass, and all your other apparatus of finery? We tell you plainly that we wish to get as much as we can for our money, though it were sold to us in the dingy recesses of a cavern.' Outspoken observations of this quality, followed by suitable acts, amount to a revolutionary insurrection against the great shopkeeping interest. The revolution is going on before our eyes.

It is curious to note how the general dissatisfaction was first demonstrated. There was no fussy clamour regarding the extravagant style in which sales were usually conducted. A humble class of persons, with an instinctive feeling that something was wrong, fell upon the device of uniting together to be their own shopkeepers; so that, whatever

profit was going, they might have it to themselves. We doubt if anything short of the nerve, self-reliance, and common-sense of Englishmen could have struck out this idea and operated on it to a thoroughly beneficial result. Co-operation had been previously tried in various quarters, but never on a principle susceptible of being expanded to enlarged dimensions. The honour of developing the novelty on a plan that could successfully take its place in the field of competition, belongs to a handful of operatives in Lancashire, which, if not the most polished, ranks as one of the most salient and enterprising of English counties. Let us go a little into a history of the movement.

We remember giving some popular lectures on the subject of co-operation in 1860, when few knew or cared much about it. Since then, it has made the most surprising advances, particularly in the central manufacturing towns of England and in London. It has not made any great way in Scotland, and we have heard nothing worth speaking about it in Ireland. A large concentrated population, general intelligence, skill in business management, and mutual trust, are the qualities required to make co-operation succeed. But above all, there must be an ability as well as a resolute determination to pay for everything with ready-money. That, indeed, is the prime feature; and those who need or prefer to take credit in their purchases, must continue to deal with the ordinary shops. Co-operative trading may accordingly be considered to be a moral agency in cultivating habits of thrift and self-denial.

Some of our readers may possibly recollect what we said years ago as to the poor beginning of the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers' Society, a co-operative concern composed of twenty-eight working-men, who set up a small store for the sale, among themselves, of provisions and clothing. Their input was a pound a piece—a united capital of £28; that was all. At the outset they were dreadfully laughed at, and there was no end of prophecies as to the failure of their project. Caring nothing for jeers or invidious prophecies, they went on their way. The thing took. From year to year, the number of members increased, till at length developing into gigantic dimensions, it carried all before it, and is one of the wonders of commerce. Just hear how the affairs of the society stood at the end of 1872. The number of members was 6444; the amount of funds, £132,912; the business done in 1872 not less than £267,577, on which a profit was realised of £33,640. In these facts are offered an example of what may be done by co-operation when properly conducted. One material cause of the prosperous extension of this undertaking consists in the fact, that members allow their dividends and profits to accumulate to their credit, instead of drawing them out as they accrue, and spending them. Another most creditable feature of this society consists in setting aside a part of the profits for the support of an Educational Department, in which are comprehended a lending library, a reference library, news-rooms, and collections of globes, maps, and scientific instruments for use of the members. Out of the

successes of this society sprang several vast concerns at Rochdale and elsewhere.

London was rather late in commencing any co-operative project, but when it did take the matter up, it was with a degree of energy very alarming to the ordinary shop-keeping interest. As is well known, the most extensive of the London societies is the Civil Service Supply Association, with many thousands of members, and friends of members. In the half-year ending August 31, 1873, the goods sold amounted to £359,627, the profit on trading was £96,804, and the working expenses amounted to £27,301. The establishment at present comprehends a secretary, treasurer, accountant, several managers and storekeepers, 70 clerks, 394 assistants, and about 20 servants and porters. The goods for sale consist of groceries, wines, provisions, hosiery and clothing, fancy goods, stationery, &c. Tradesmen of nearly all kinds in London enter into arrangements with the society, to allow a discount on all articles sold at their shops to its members on producing their tickets, so that there is scarcely an article on which a considerable saving may not be effected.

A step beyond retail store-keeping was taken in 1864 by the establishment of the North of England Co-operative Wholesale Society (Limited), the central office of which is at Manchester. Its object is to supply goods wholesale to co-operative stores, five hundred of which concerns now purchase from it. At the end of 1872, it consisted of 131,191 members who were shareholders; and the value of goods sold in that year amounted to £1,049,394; the profits being £10,468. Besides importing foreign articles, the society purchases vast quantities of butter, provisions, and dry goods in all parts of the United Kingdom; latterly, the manufacture of biscuits and the business of banking have been added to this comprehensive concern, which has numerous branches and agents. Co-operation, however, has gone even beyond this. At Rochdale, Leeds, and elsewhere, co-operative societies composed of working-men have set on foot large cotton-factories, flour-mills, or other industrial establishments, which compete in the general field of manufacturing enterprise. In those concerns, the operatives receive weekly wages, and also dividends on profits after paying for management. Fire and Life Assurance establishments have likewise been set up on the co-operative principle, the development of which seems to be perfectly endless.

We have not space to go into the general statistics of co-operative concerns. Large and small, they are now numbered by thousands, and their practical success is a new social element. The principle aimed at receives advocacy in a newspaper called the *Co-operative News*. It should further be stated, that with a view to afford means for mutual advice and consultation, there has been established a Central Co-operation Board at Manchester; the members connected with which hold congresses and conferences at different places.

To what extent ordinary shop-businesses have been injured by the setting up of co-operative stores, there are no means of judging. That in certain quarters they must have experienced a decline in traffic, is tolerably evident. But, to say nothing of the idle and lavish cost on outward show, are there not too many shops for the amount of business that can possibly be transacted? The

distributors of goods in large as well as small towns are seemingly too numerous, and we cannot doubt that some of them must give way in face of the co-operative development. At all events, they will, in self-defence, be compelled to compete with the stores by lowering prices, and dealing more than ever they did on the ready-money principle. And that itself will prove a great gain to the community—sellers as well as buyers. W. C.

THE FOREST'S FOES AND FRIENDS.

THE aspect of a forest produces on the most indifferent natures an impression of the picturesque from which they cannot escape. The majestic grandeur of tree succeeding tree as far as the eye can reach, forces them to bow down before a superior power; thus, forests have generally been chosen for the worship of divinities: the Greeks believed them to be peopled with gods; and up to our own times, there is scarcely a country that has not some tree that ancient piety has consecrated. Every tree has its own peculiar aspect. The oak with its gray rifted trunk, and dull, deeply indented foliage, gives a sad and monotonous character; proud of its strength, it will not suffer itself to be surpassed in height by other trees, and when young, perishes rather than grow under shade. Not so with the beech: its white, glossy bark and pale-green leaves mark it out at a distance, and the thick shadow it casts over the ground kills all the weeds. The fir offers its straight, tall stem, and evergreen foliage, but the branches regularly arranged obey an inflexible law, and give a uniform appearance to the landscape. There is much more variety in a wood, where the leaves fall in the autumn, and where each individual obeys, as it were, its own inspiration.

But for him who knows how to penetrate its secrets, this is a very superficial view; the forest is a complete world of organised creatures, from the most perfect to that which betrays the early efforts of creation in its rudimentary constitution. Though, perhaps, not very visible, animal life abounds. Myriads of insects are at work, winged, or in the form of caterpillars, effecting incalculable ravages on the trees. There are also curious phenomena which arise, such as the deviation of branches, or horny excrescences on the leaves. The gall-nut, so much used in dyeing, is produced by an insect which lays its eggs in the buds of the oak; when developed, the bud gives birth to the little spherical nut which contains the colouring-matter, and which is gathered about the middle of July.

In deciduous forests, the insect most to be feared is the May-bug or cockchafer. The larvæ pass three years in the ground, during which they feed on the roots of all kinds of plants, sparing neither young plantations nor grain. In their perfect state they are no less injurious, living on the leaves as they shoot, and not leaving a trace of vegetation on the trees. Caterpillars do not do so much harm to the leaf-bearing trees, though the *lyparis* and *bombyx* often shew traces of their passage.

An excellent plan for lessening the damages caused by caterpillars is to mingle deciduous with resinous trees; the enemies of the one spare the other, and so, in case of invasion, some part escape the plague. In Germany, more than elsewhere, as the pine forests are in the majority, the subject of the destruction of insects is studied with the

greatest care; it is a branch of sylviculture which finds a place in all their books, and is discussed at the congress of the foresters which takes place every year. Each communicates the observations he has made in his own locality; and when a new method has been found to answer, it is spread through all the country. Near Torgau, more than twenty-five thousand thalers have been expended for many years to destroy the caterpillars in the forest of Annaburg, and yet an immense quantity of wood has been cut down. In 1837, these insects despoiled of their leaves all the fir-trees in the forests of Stettin, over an extent of eight hundred acres; and more than a thousand thalers was spent to destroy ninety-four millions. At another period, the caterpillars devastated in two years a seventh of all the state forests; and in those of Stralsund six hundred millions of eggs were destroyed.

To defend the pine plantations from the hylobes, the German foresters surround them with fagots of brambles, in which the insects lay their eggs, and these are afterwards burnt. Sometimes they daub the trees with pitch, to prevent them creeping up; or dig ditches filled with water, to isolate infected districts. But when an invasion has reached a certain proportion, all becomes useless, and nature alone arrests it by the multiplication of enemies. Among these are the carnivorous insects, such as the tribe of beetles, which climb up the tree to seek their prey; the ants, and the ichneumons. These last are parasites, laying their eggs in the back of the caterpillar, upon which the young larvæ feed. The wounded insect does not die immediately, and lives to become a chrysalis; but instead of a butterfly coming out, the young ichneumons appear. The owl, the hedgehog, the lizard, the frog, and the snake, destroy immense numbers, and above all the bird, which is the most pitiless and ruthless in its search for food.

Man, says M. Michelet, could not live without the bird, which saves him from insects and reptiles; but the bird can live without man. The eagle would still reign over his Alpine throne, the swallow would take his annual migration; without waiting for human ear, the nightingale of the forest would sing his glorious hymn with greater security. But nothing is more sad than a landscape without birds. The well-known forest of Fontainebleau, so varied in its aspect, so majestic in its wooded glades, is always melancholy; not the song of a single bird breaks the silence. Destitute of water, for the sandy soil drinks up all the rain, having no spring nor stream, it is deadly for the bird, which flies away as from a land under a curse. Under the first impression, you admire it, but by degrees the feeling of sadness oppresses you, and at last renders you insensible to its beauties. Of the many varieties of birds, some prefer the fields, whilst others belong exclusively to the forest. These are eminently useful, destroying insects and other injurious animals; many of them furnishing excellent sport as game, and food for the table.

There are two kinds of birds especially valuable, the woodpecker and the cuckoo. The first runs up the trunk of the tree, picking out all the caterpillars, wasps, and hornets, then taps the bark, to ascertain if there be any enemy lurking in the interior. Once on the scent, he tears off a piece of bark, and hollows a spot until he reaches the larva he is in search of. Unfortunately, the ignorant destroy this bird, on the plea that the holes he

makes are detrimental to the tree; but this is unfounded, as he never attacks any but decayed wood, and prevents the spread of the malady. The cuckoo feeds principally on the hairy caterpillars, which other birds avoid; and it is said that, in 1847, a pine forest in Pomerania was saved by a flight of migrating cuckoos, which installed themselves for some weeks, and cleared it completely of the caterpillars which abounded there. Their sweet and plaintive note is always welcome as the harbinger of spring.

If among the smaller tribes of birds there are some which live principally on grain, there are none which do not redeem the damage they thus cause by the services they render in destroying insects. Nor must it be imagined that a bird is injurious when it lives on seeds only, for it thus destroys a great many weeds. Pigeons, which are exclusively granivorous, do eat the wheat; but in exchange they consume the seeds of fennel, poppy, spurge, and other troublesome plants. Whilst they are treasured in England and Belgium, these birds are shot down in other countries without pity. The sparrow, too, which has received so much malediction, is equally useful, as a pair will often carry to their nest forty caterpillars an hour, or three thousand a week. Thus it happened that in the environs of Vienna, when every cultivator was obliged to pay a tax of two sparrow-heads, the trees of the district were devoured by caterpillars, and it was found necessary to revoke the law.

In these pages, we lately spoke of the prodigious damage done to agriculture in France, by people mercilessly killing small birds. In Italy, the same result takes place. There the people give themselves up with a sort of fury to the shooting of small birds during the period of the migration. People of all ages and ranks, children, old men, nobles, merchants, priests, labourers, and peasants, abandon their work at this season. The fields and the river-sides resound with pistol-shots, nets are spread, and bird-lime laid. On the banks of Lake Maggiore the number of birds thus exterminated amounts to sixty or seventy thousand per annum, and in Lombardy to millions. Need it be wondered at that the song of the bird is so rarely heard in the beautiful orange groves or vineyards! whilst the countries beyond the Alps suffer proportionately.

There are few things more interesting to the naturalist than to sit immovable at the foot of a tree and listen to the birds, who seem to have taken man as their model, and display all the passions of anger, joy, sorrow, and jealousy; but love is the exclusive end of their lives, for this they put on their gayest colours, for this they sing their sweetest songs. There are cries of joy from the nest when the father brings the young a delicate morsel, and of fear when an enemy approaches, in the shape of a hawk hovering over their tree, or a ruthless boy ready to tear the beautiful home in pieces. No one is better placed for observation than the forester; he traverses the woods at all hours and in all seasons, and can follow the different manifestations of animal life in its various phases. Placed by their masters in localities almost without intellectual resources, such studies prevent their moral faculties from falling into inaction. Dr Pfeil, who has reached the highest grade of foresters in Prussia, remarks, that thanks to his love for natural history, he has been able to bear a residence of twelve years in the marshes of Poland, without any

other society than that of uneducated peasants, with whom it was impossible to converse, and that this has kept him from the drinking customs which are so prevalent among this class. According to him, one of the most interesting studies is the language of animals; it is certain that individuals of the same species understand each other; they have different cries, which man may learn; and for many months he hid in ambuscade, near a marsh covered with wild-ducks, until he learned every voice, and could distinguish that of a strange bird.

Among the animals frequenting the forest there are two distinct kinds—the herbivorous and the carnivorous; the formation of the jaw suffices to distinguish them. The former are all hurtful, since they live on the trees, devouring the young shoots; the latter, on the contrary, are useful, as they keep down the excessive multiplication of the others. Some few are dangerous even to man, such as the bear and the wolf. The bear is now rare, and confined to the inaccessible summits of the Alps and the Pyrenees; it has been hunted without pity, and has gradually withdrawn from the haunts of men into the deepest solitudes. The same fate has befallen the wolf, which requires large tracts of moors, heaths, and forests for a home; as the land is cultivated and the trees cut down, the domain where it ruled as a monarch is lessened. Tracked on all sides by a price put on its head, it will not long escape absolute destruction. Sometimes the wolf is hunted by dogs, but it is both difficult and painful, as it runs straight forward through fields, vineyards, and valleys at such a speed that the dogs lose their wind, and give up the chase. A battue is more successful: when one has been seen in the forest, the peasants are summoned, and placed on the outskirts; whilst the huntsman with his dogs and men penetrate into the interior, and drive the animal in the direction of the guns.

The wild-cat, the badger, the fox, the polecat, are only to be feared as the destroyers of game, so that the foresters kill them by poison or other means. They do not all deserve such a proscription, as many live on field-mice and reptiles. Many of the continental foxes are bagged and sent to England for the pleasure of our hunters; as the country is unknown to them, they do not run to their holes so easily and escape the dogs. The rabbit, the hare, the roebuck, the stag, and the wild-boar are now the only animals of the forest which are hunted. It was not always so, when Charlemagne and his successors went out in splendid array to the immense forests of the empire, to seek the bison and the aurochs or wild ox, which are now only to be found in the plains of Poland and Lithuania.

The rabbit is the most dangerous enemy among the herbivorous tribes which the forest has to fear. Not content with eating the leaves and young shoots in spring, it attacks, during the winter, when vegetation is interrupted, the bark of trees; the rising of the sap is thus prevented, and the tree dies. It multiplies with the greatest rapidity; a single couple will produce fifty in a year, and infest a large forest in two years. Thousands are killed in the crown forests of France and Germany without their number seeming to lessen. Hares are much less hurtful; they do not increase so quickly, and preferring grass to trees, they seek their food in the plain. Thus we see that nature, in creating a multitude of species, has not confined herself to

those which alone are useful to man; but all are submitted to the law which proportions their multiplication to the chances they run of being destroyed; over which man may exercise his power in the animal kingdom as in the vegetable.

LADY LIVINGSTON'S LEGACY.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—GONE.

'You threaten, then? Do your worst! I would sooner bear all that men's wrath can inflict, than I would be as I have been of late, the daily, hourly companion of one whom I despise as much as I despise myself for the weakness that has made me purchase safety at such a price.'

It was Violet Maybrook who spoke, and as she did so, her lustrous eyes flashed, and her beautiful face might have served a painter for a model for the passion, Scorn.

'You are foolish, Vi, dear—foolish and rash as well!' answered Aphrodite Larpent, with a malignant glance that belied the studied calm of her skilfully managed voice. 'Remember, it will be too late, when once you are known for what you are, to come back to the quiet home and the poor little friend of whom you speak with such superb contempt. Pride is a dangerous counsellor, Violet, my love, and if you are wise, you will grow humbler. You saw how much more reasonable a view of his position was taken, but half an hour since, by your fine London dandy, your lady-killing *sabreur*, Sir Frederick Dashwood.'

'Dashwood is a coward,' returned Miss Maybrook haughtily: 'he can cringe before the uplifted hand that threatens to strike. There are trees that bend, but there are others that break sooner than bow to the storm.'

There was a moment's pause, during which these two, playmates in infancy, companions in youth, friends never, looked into each other's eyes, like duellists who ponder where best to plant the mortal thrust.

It may be conjectured that little concord was likely to prevail in a household composed of such widely different natures as that of the elf-shrewd, malicious, jealous of all superiority—and of Violet, whose fiery spirit abhorred the dissimulation to which circumstances—so she held—had compelled her. Since the first hour of their residence together, Miss Maybrook and her hostess had been on those more than half-hostile terms on which women can endure to live, not seldom, but which would be intolerable to men, and at length a visit from Sir Frederick had fanned the smouldering embers of hate into a flame. Dashwood, who felt that Violet was not one whom he could safely neglect, but who, in giving himself the trouble to call in Great Eldon Street, had, most unfortunately for himself, selected Aphy Larpent as a butt for his ill-humoured sarcasms, had deprecated the stinging words by which his insolence was repaid. A bad man will often put up with affronts not bruited abroad, and Dashwood, whose physical courage remained unshaken, had yet become morally a dastard, and

quailed before the bitter retorts of the humbly born music-mistress. Nor, while his stay lasted, did Violet betray by word or sign the annoyance which all women experience when they witness the humiliation of the man they have loved. It was not until the baronet had taken his hangdog, handsome face out of Great Eldon Street, that the suppressed quarrel between Violet and her old acquaintance rose to a white-heat.

'Why did you ask me to come here?' asked the former, breaking silence, and speaking in the direct and fearless fashion which belonged to her. It was a cruel little laugh with which her entertainer preluded her answer.

'Fie, dearest, what an unmannered question! Can you wish me to tell you a score of neat fibs about old associations, childish hours of sport and study, yearning tenderness, and so forth? Take the truth, since nothing else will serve you. I wanted to have my slave, as it were, within hearing of the crack of the whip and the call of the voice. I wanted to fit the chains upon those stubborn wrists of yours, link by link. I wanted to make the girl whom I always hated—for I did detest you, Vi, dear! since you and I first plaited wild-flower crowns beneath the maple trees—feel that it was for me to command, and for her to obey. It did not suit my whim that you should soar out of my reach, and make, as your beauty might enable you to do, a marriage that would raise you high above my level. That was why I asked you here, Violet, darling!'

Violet, with her pale, beautiful face set and rigid, and her eyes absolutely blazing with wrath, looked terrible indeed, as she rose from her seat and advanced towards her enemy. Aphrodite Larpent was not naturally timid, yet she sprang to her feet and laid her hand upon the bell-rope, as if to summon aid.

'You need not fear that I should harm you,' said Violet calmly, but with an expression in the studiously modulated tones of her rich voice that the other had never before heard. 'You have been very frank with me, and I am glad to know on such good authority what I have merely suspected until now. Were we alone together in the woods we both remember, among the silver pines and the forked hemlocks, far from this brick-and-mortar wilderness, far from the million eyes and ears that keep watch over us here, I would kill you!'

'I do not doubt it in the least,' returned Aphy, with an insolent gesture of the shoulders, but growing perceptibly more pale and sallow.

'No; and you are right not to doubt it,' said Violet Maybrook, with her coldest smile. 'But do not think that because we are both of us units in the crowded civilisation of the Old World, it is safe to deal with me as you have done—safe to rely, constantly, on my fears and my forbearance.'

'I thought you never knew fear. Rumour said so. When was Vi Maybrook afraid of a half-broken horse, or of crossing a sheet of flawed ice, or of any of the risks of our rough colonial life?' returned Aphrodite tauntingly. 'It was one of your titles, that courage of yours, to be our queen and leader when we were half-grown slips of girls, and many a proof you gave of it. Has the English air, or the humdrum routine of Lady Livingston's house, turned your old dauntless spirit into cowardice at last?'

'You shall see!' said Violet, with a gentleness

unnatural at such a moment. 'Do you remember, years ago, on the Sasquemantock, how the canoe was staved in by the sunken rock, and the Indian guide was drunk and drowsy, and, but for me, the little, sodden bundle of dripping garments and drenched hair that they called Aphy Larpent, would have gone over the Falls to perish? Do you remember, long before that, how the children, our young playfellows, ran shrieking away from the one child that remained seated by the fallen tree, crouching in panic terror, because of the rattle-snake that had reared his menacing head, and with deadly jaws apart, and bright cold eye fixed on his destined victim, poised himself ready for his spring? There was one other, though, of that childish company, a young girl but a few months older than the frightened little creature that fear seemed to have slain before the snake stooped his graceful head; and she fronted the reptile, with no weapon but a switch, and—— But you know the rest of the story, Aphy, as well as I do.'

'I do; and you saved me then, and again that other time, without a thought of your own danger,' exclaimed Aphrodite, flushing to the roots of her hair, and with tears, real tears, standing in those hard, evil eyes of hers; 'and I was a wretch to forget it, and to hate you, and envy you, and plague you, as I have done. Come, Vi; I beg your forgiveness. Come, let you and me be friends. I mean it. By my very soul, I swear to you that I do mean it.'

And for once she was sincere. Perhaps no one can be all bad, and for the time the soft spot which lurks undetected in even the hardest heart had been touched in the case of Aphy Larpent. But Violet Maybrook proudly put aside the offered hand of her former friend.

'Chance, since then,' she said sternly, 'has given you a power over me, to which all unwillingly, I have submitted, loathing myself that I held my life by such a tenure. Your malice, and the base self-seeking of the man for whom I have sacrificed the right to good men's esteem, have made that life as bitter and worthless to me as the fruit that strangers gather beside the sullen waters of the Dead Sea, and your power, early playmate, early enemy, is on the wane. I am very young yet, but I have grown weary of life, and would rest. For amity between us two, let fire and water first coalesce; their alliance would be likelier than ours. You may, for a moment, be softened towards me. Incarnate falsehood though you be, it is possible that for an hour, or a day, you might be as good as your word; but to-morrow would bring back the old jealousy, the old dislike; and even if you could learn not to hate me, I could not forgive you.—Do not smile, or fancy that my hostility is of no account. I know, or can divine, your schemes of self-interest, and I will tear them to shreds as easily as I could tear the flimsy web of a spider.'

With the step and bearing of an angry queen, Violet moved towards the door. Aphrodite made a second attempt to intercept her.

'Take my hand, and let us be friends,' she said pleadingly; 'you'll never repent it; indeed, indeed you will not. I could help you, that I could, about Dashwood, and in other matters, and'——

'What need have I of your services?' haughtily rejoined Miss Maybrook. 'Let me pass, dupe or temptress, for I think that both parts suited equally

well with your character, of the man whom you egged on your brother to kill. Let me pass, I say—your very touch is pollution.'

And this time Aphy Larpent made no effort to detain her guest. The elf threw herself, so soon as the door had closed, upon Mrs Gulp's hard square sofa, and hot tears, very different from those which a momentary sentiment had wrung from her, fell like rain upon the faded cushion on which she had laid her head. It is very likely that Violet was accurate when she said that relenting on the part of Aphy Larpent could be but of ephemeral duration; but the revulsion of feeling was now very abrupt, and it seemed to rend her, as evil spirits rent the demoniacs of old. No woman can be indifferent to another woman's contempt, and, for the time, Aphrodite almost forgot, in the poignant anguish of her shame, the ample means of vengeance that lay within her grasp.

'She shall pay dearly, ah! dearly, for this,' murmured Bruce Larpent's sister, as she tossed restless on the sofa-pillows; and yet, as she spoke, she felt as if she would willingly have exchanged places with her late antagonist. 'Above me, from the first, always, ever, above me; even with the shadow of death tracking her, she keeps her boasted superiority to the last. I can ruin, but not humble her. That accursed pride of hers remains beyond my reach. Well, well! we shall see! It may be your turn, Violet, before long to crave pardon from the despised Aphy Larpent, and to be denied.'

Hours passed away before the slight, lithe form that lay upon the sofa ceased to writhe and to change its position, while all the time bitter thoughts went whirling through the busy brain. She had never, in truth, quite made up her mind, this Aphrodite Larpent, as to the actual use to which she should ultimately put her power over Violet. She had looked on it as on a talisman which might be made profitable and pleasant. By the aid of the secret which she knew, she had extorted money, had exercised influence, had repaid tenfold, in suffering, the contempt which Miss Maybrook had been too proud to dissemble. It was Aphy's nature to revel in intrigue and mystery, to compass selfish ends by crooked ways. But she had never been quite certain as to what she should do at the last. She thought now, for the first time, that she was certain on that subject. There was a dangerous glimmer in her shifting eyes, and two scarlet blotches burned on her usually sallow face. And at length she rose, adjusting her hair before the mirror over the mantel-piece, and effacing as best she might the traces of recent tears. The hour of dinner was approaching—dwellers in Great Eldon Street, especially such dwellers as belong to the female sex, dine unfashionably early, and the slipshod maid-of-all-work, who might have been twin-sister to the Betsy Jane to whose duties she had succeeded, came to lay the cloth in lodging-house fashion as a preliminary to that meal. But the dinner itself arrived, and still Violet came not, and Mary Ann being questioned, declared that Miss Maybrook had left the house long ago, and had not returned.

'Left the house!' exclaimed Aphrodite, as a sudden idea suggested itself to her. 'She took nothing with her—no luggage, I mean? No, of course not, or I should have heard the noise.'

The girl replied in the negative. Miss Maybrook, so far as Mary Ann knew, had taken nothing with her. She had simply gone out on foot, 'as it might be, for a walk,' and had not as yet come back. That was all.

Time went on. It was long since Aphrodite's solitary meal had been concluded, yet Violet Maybrook came not, and her hostess sat in the window, watching, with an anxiety and an impatience that surprised herself, for the return of her avowed enemy. Still, seconds growing into minutes, minutes expanding into hours, the time went on. A wild idea arose once in Aphy Larpent's brooding mind. 'Not—not dead!' she muttered, with white lips, to herself—'the river!' And then there passed before her mental vision the phantom of Violet, not, as she had last seen her, proud and contemptuous in her fierce beauty, but cold and motionless, with the long dark hair defiled with mud and tide-weed, the lustrous eyes hidden for ever beneath the heavy white lids. 'Can I have driven her to that?' Aphy asked of herself, almost quailing before the thoughts which her words evoked. It was not pity that she felt, but a formless horror that she longed to shako off, and be free from. At length she decided on going up to Miss Maybrook's room, the same which had formerly been occupied by her own brother, Bruce. No; nothing, apparently, had been disturbed since last she entered that dingy chamber. In her walking-dress, as usual, Violet had gone out, and there were no signs of packing, or of any preparation for departure, visible.

Stay! What was that? Merely a scrap of paper, which had probably been placed upon the dressing-table, but which, by some accident, had fallen on the floor, and had been swept aside by the skirt of Aphy's dress in passing, and so lain until now unseen. But the scrap of paper had writing upon it, and to the following effect: 'War, then, let it be! You have defied me, and must thank yourself for the result. Before you read this, I shall be on my way to — But no matter. It is enough for you to know that the fabric of deception which you have so cunningly built up is shattered at a blow.—V. M.'

What the threat portended, Aphrodite could not guess. It was the threat itself that angered her, coupled as it was with Violet's abrupt departure. To whom had this wayward, headstrong girl gone? And what was the meaning of her menace? Bruce Larpent's sister ground her teeth together with fury at the thought that through the agency of her whom she had regarded as a useful instrument, her shameful history might be published throughout London, and her painful struggles to lead a new life, free from the taint of disgrace, be in vain. Yet Violet was no ordinary tale-bearer. She might have the means of a nobler revenge than this. Be it as it might, it must be war now, and war to the knife, without pity or mercy. Aphrodite's face grew grim and resolute, and she knifed her brows and compressed her lips for a few instants, then rang the bell, sharply, once and again. 'Get me a cab!' she said, when the lagging hand-maiden appeared; 'and ask Mrs Gulp to let me have her bill for whatever I owe her. I am going away—only for a day or two, most likely—but I am going at once. Don't stare at me, but do as I tell you to do.'

Hastily she attired herself for a journey, hastily

she threw into the smallest of her trunks a few necessary clothes, and, after impatiently awaiting the slow completion of her little account by the spasmodic Mrs Gulp, she stepped into her cab, and was driven swiftly off towards the railway station which she had indicated as her destination. She had been gone perhaps for an hour, when another cab dashed up to the door in Great Eldon Street which bore the conspicuous monosyllable of Gulp, and Oswald Charlton alighted, followed by Sergeant Flint. 'Miss Davis—or Larpent, it's all the same, at home, my dear?' said the sergeant jauntily. 'We must see her, the squire and I, on a little matter of business that cannot wait, so shew us up at once, please.—What! gone—gone by railway!' and the detective gave a long whistle at the news. 'We may as well look round the rooms, anyhow, as the search-warrant entitles us to do, squire, but I am afraid the bird has not left much behind her in the empty nest.'

CHAPTER XXXV.—TO SCOTLAND YARD.

'Nothing, nothing at all, except this,' said Sergeant Flint disconsolately, as he entered the tiny sitting-room in which Oswald had awaited the termination of the search among Aphy Larpent's effects; 'which could scarcely have come honestly into the young woman's keeping;' and as he spoke he opened his broad hand and disclosed a diamond cross, with a large sapphire set in the middle of it; 'and which must be taken care of until she proves her right to its possession. If ever her brother wrote to her, she has burned the letters, or has them about her person; and the same may be said, no doubt, of the will. It's a hard nut to crack, squire, for all that it seemed so easy at the outset.'

'Our wisest plan will surely be to follow her without delay,' returned Oswald. 'It seems most probable that if the will be indeed in her hands, she has withdrawn to some place of concealment, whence she may make better terms. As for the jewel you shew me, it is odd, but I seem to have a faint recollection of having seen it before—of having admired it, when I was a boy.'

'I daresay you have, squire,' remarked the sergeant dryly; and then re-opening the door, he addressed himself to a policeman standing on the landing-place without, who had aided in the late perquisition amidst Miss Larpent's boxes and drawers, and bade him send up the maid-servant at once.

Mary Ann's answers to the detective's queries were explicit enough. She had herself called the cab from the nearest stand. The number of that vehicle she did not know, but with the driver of it she had a casual acquaintance, made up of occasional nods and winks of jocular recognition when she went by on errands; and that he was a regular frequenter of the cab-rank in question, she could testify. He was a stoutish-built young man, with a red face and a drab great-coat. The horse had two white feet, and the cab had of late been newly painted. Was certain that she could point out cab and cabman out of fifty others. Miss Davis, or Larpent, had bidden the man to drive quickly to the Silcheshire—yes, Silcheshire railway—and the cab had gone off at a brisk pace. Which was all that Mary Ann knew.

'Silcheshire, I suppose?' said Oswald; and the

sergeant, with a nod of assent, produced a Railway Guide, and read as follows: 'London, Silcheshire, Helmsea, Docktown, and Whitborne Railway'—

'Whitborne!' exclaimed Oswald, surprised. 'Why, that is where Mrs Philip Dashwood is living, and Miss Beatrice Fleming is now on a visit to her. Of all singular selections for a hiding-place, that would appear the most extraordinary.'

The sergeant did not seem to see this in the same light as his non-professional companion. He tapped his forehead once or twice, then shook his head, and smiled slightly. 'What a game *that* would be!' he muttered; 'and yet the odds are against it. Educated young women are the most difficult of all to make out—they are.' Then, addressing himself to Oswald, he suggested that they should repair at once to the proximate cab-stand, and, guided by Mary Ann, endeavour to get speech with the cab-driver who had conveyed Aphy Larpent to the terminus. There was only one cab, as it turned out, left upon the rank, a confirmed crawler; drawn by a slow and heavy-heeled horse, and driven by an elderly and gin-perfumed person; who, in defiance of the warmth of the weather, adhered obstinately to his thin and weather-stained coat of many capes, such as hackney-coachmen wore in the Tom and Jerry days that are departed.

'Why, it's Old Nick.—How are you, my buck?' called out the sergeant, in his cheery fashion, as he caught sight of the grog-blossomed countenance of this veteran of the cab-rank. The owner of the diabolical *sobriquet* awoke from his nap, to cast rather a perturbed glance at the detective.

'Nothing up, sure-ly,' was his rueful ejaculation. 'A poor cove can't so much as lay the silk over his nag, or touch his hat to a fare, without being pulled up for it now-a-days.' But you're above them lags, ain't you, sergeant?

'Don't you be afraid, Nick,' answered that officer genially; 'nobody wants the pleasure of your company now, as the Bow Street magistrate did last year, when you forgot to give notice of the bracelet left in your cab. And you must admit we drew it mild for you about the previous character, and so saved you the other six months' oakum-picking. No malice, eh, old boy?'

'No malice on my side,' grumbled out Nick, still in evident distrust of the motives of his questioner. When, however, he was made to understand that the sergeant was merely desirous of information respecting the cab wherein Aphy had been conveyed to the terminus, his vigilance relaxed, and he became sufficiently communicative. 'That was Bill Barnes,' he said gruffly; 'he as was in the public line as barman, and couldn't quite square it about the money taken over the counter, at the *Friend in Need*, Camden-Town way, as got the Great Eldon Street job. Paints, regular, every spring, and goes in for rosettes in the ears of that screw he drives, Bill does, and so gets picked off the rank oftener than is fair to his mates. Howsomedeyer, it so happens I can tell you where he drove to, anyways first, when he'd got his fare inside, and the trunk on the footboard alongside of him. He was a-driving past, and he'd just given us the office, by sloping his whip—you know, Mr Flint—in the way that says I'm for such or such a railway station, when the lady tugs at the check-string, and as that don't pay, puts her head out of window, and tells him, loud enough for us to hear, that she's changed her mind, and that

Bill was to go— You'd never guess where, sergeant, not if you went on from now to Christmas.' And the old man paused, evidently delighted at the idea of having presented the too-knowing sergeant with an enigma beyond his powers of solution.

'No; I give it up,' said the detective, after pondering for a few seconds, with much real or assumed perplexity in his face. 'I thought, once, I had it; but it wouldn't work. Out with the answer, Nick.'

The provoking charioteer merely coughed huskily behind his mittened right hand, and murmured something about the 'uncommon dry' character of the weather.

'Not good for your complaint, eh, Nick?' said the sergeant, smiling, as he produced two half-crowns and chinked them together, meditatively. 'Let's know what the lady said, and then try the old prescription—Jamaica rum, hot, with cloves and sugar—at my expense, Nick.' Either mollified by the prospect of this as a seasonable refreshment for early summer, or not caring to keep so influential an acquaintance as Mr Flint too long on the tenter-hooks of suspense, the old cabman made up his mind to comply.

'You won't have me in the box, sir, to take davy to it, will you? It would break my heart, I think, to be put there!' he said deferentially.

'You are better acquainted with another part of the court, Nick, we know,' returned the sergeant, with a sawing movement of his forefinger; 'but make your mind easy. We'll do without you as a witness.' And again he soffly chinked the half-crowns together.

'And you can't guess it?' repeated the old man, with a grin.

'Not if I were to addle my brains over the thing!' answered the sergeant petulantly, but gently touching Oswald's elbow, as if to indicate that his impatience was but counterfeit. 'Can't you collar your cash, and let us have it as you heard it!'

'Well, then, she told him to drive her to Scotland Yard,' returned Nick, but reluctantly, as is the wont of one who grudges to the world at large the co-proprietorship of a transcendent joke, lately his sole and secret possession.

'To Scotland Yard, did she?' blithely responded Sergeant Flint. 'Then I'll tell you what it is, Nick, you shall have a handsel, and the squire and yours to command will go to Scotland Yard too. Jump in, sir; and you, Nick, be free with the whipcord—in a merciful way, of course.'

'What conceivable object can she have had for such an expedition?' said Oswald, five minutes after the cab had begun to rumble through the stony streets. Sergeant Flint, who had sat until now absorbed in his own thoughts, with his eyes fixed on vacancy, started, and presently broke into a low laugh, as if the humour of the situation were too much for his gravity.

'If I were a bit of a humbug, sir, as some of my betters are, I'd look wise, and hold my tongue. The doctors do it, don't they, when they stand round the bed of a sick swell, and pull solemn faces, and give Latin names, to what they can't cure, for want of knowing how? And the City Dons, they do it when there's the toss of a half-penny between them and bankruptcy? But I'll be honest with you, squire, and own that I am

nonplussed. I know no more, sir, what that aggravating young female party may mean, than if I had just come up from Devises or Taunton to join the Z division as a second-class constable. My first idea was, that her move was to give herself up. They do it, sometimes, when there's something on their minds, at least men do, for I never knew a woman do it; but, bless you, she's too artful and too hard-bitten for that. So, unless it's a blind, it is quite beyond me.'

Having said which, the sergeant beguiled the remainder of the route by whistling the most lugubrious airs in his collection. He became active again, if not confident, when they reached the somewhat uninviting nook where Justice keeps her staunchest bloodhounds ready to slip upon the traces of Guilt. 'Wait for me one minute, squire,' he said, and disappeared. The minute expanded to exaggerated proportions before he returned, wiping his heated brow, on which the beads stood thickly. 'Seems to me I'd better resign, and try for a country situation,' he said excitedly, but with genuine mortification in voice and mien. 'Stoke Pogis, I think, would be about my mark; or, perhaps, if I were the one policeman at Little Pedlington, I might not find the duties too bewildering. Pride will have a fall, they say, and I was proud, I will admit, of knowing a trifle more than my neighbours. I didn't think there was a game in London, of a shady sort, that I couldn't have told you about, more or less; and hero I am—beaten, at my time of life, by a little sawallow chit from Canada. Starkey will have the laugh against me, won't he, after our wild-geese chace over to Paris, and all we have done?'

'But what has she done?' asked Oswald, smiling to see that emulation can exist even among thief-takers.

'She has done this,' said the inconsolable Flint: 'she came, as bold as brass, and asked for Superintendent Starkey. He was expected, and they asked her to wait. In ten minutes, in he came, and preciously surprised he must have been, for before that, long as he had hung about Great Eldon Street, she had seemed to hate him as if he were poison. Nobody knows what she told him; but he got very serious, and after a word with the assistant-commissioner, off he took her to the private residence of a police magistrate. And what for, says you, squire? Well, unless it was to give in her depositions, swear to her information, and get a warrant in some case unusually pressing, I can form no notion. She may have gone to confess; but I suspect, if so, her penitence could have been kept till morning. All Starkey said, going out, was, that it would prove a heavy business. No more, and no less.'

'She would not, this Miss Larpent, have taken luggage with her, had not her intention been to travel. Rely on it, she is not in London now,' said Oswald, after a moment's consideration; 'and I really think our best plan will be, to go to Whitborne at once, and to inform Mrs Dashwood and her guest, Miss Fleming, of the steps which we have taken, and of what we have ascertained concerning the lost will. There is a prospect, too, that in or near Whitborne we may discover the person we seek.'

Sergeant Flint assented, and they drove off once more. But the streets were choked with the overgrown traffic of plethoric London, blocks were

frequent, and when the station was reached, it was found that the train had started some minutes before, and, as Sergeant Flint soon elicited from a railway policeman, Superintendent Starkey and Miss Larpent had been among the passengers for Whitborne.

THE CHEQUE BANK.

THE distinguishing feature of British banking has been, and is still, the system of cheques. By this system our gold is economised, which is an essential to the prosperity of the country, owing to a growing scarcity of the precious metal. Cheques, however, are almost exclusively used for large payments; in Scotland this is obviated, to a certain extent, by the extensive use of pound-notes of the value of twenty shillings; but in England the trouble arising from all small payments having to be made in coin, is great. A scheme has been, however, devised and brought into active operation, which will altogether do away with the difficulty in England, and which threatens, to a certain extent, to eclipse the Scotch small notes. This scheme is the Cheque Bank, and the careful thought and foresight which must have been bestowed upon it, reflects great credit upon those who have got it up. Its principles are so novel, and so important to the British commercial world, that—albeit with its financial position or success we have nothing to do—a glance at its advantages and peculiarities will be both interesting and instructive.

One of its most striking peculiarities, and what must needs be a great assistance to it, in this its infancy, is that it acts in co-operation with already existing banks, instead of in antagonism to them, so that other metropolitan banks are made, as it were, branches of the Cheque Bank. Thus no one need go farther than a few yards to pay in or draw out his money. When money is deposited, the only receipt given is a cheque-book containing cheques for the amount lodged. The largest amount for which any one cheque can be drawn is ten pounds. If we deposit a hundred pounds, we receive a cheque-book containing ten cheques for ten pounds; we may, however, have twenty cheques for five pounds, or one hundred cheques for one pound. Now, we can draw only to the amount of our deposit, and no farther, for, in the corner of each cheque, its value is perforated in words—thus being indelibly fixed. In this way it is a sheer impossibility for us to overdraw our account, for though we may make out a cheque for any less amount than that specified on it, we cannot for a greater. This is a great advantage, as there can never be any cheque returned to the payee with 'No funds' inscribed on it, as too often is the case with the old system. If, then, we make out some cheques for a less amount than that specified, there must be a balance standing at our credit when the cheque-book is finished. This we may have carried on towards a new book, or, if we like, we may draw it, on surrendering the counterfoils, of the old cheque-book. All cheques are made payable to order, and are crossed besides; so that, before receiving payment, the cheque must have been endorsed. This puts such an effectual barrier to unfair dealing, that the risk run by the Cheque Bank is comparatively insignificant. Each book of cheques contains ten, for which the uniform

price is one shilling—tenpence being for government stamps, and the odd twopence being divided between the expense of the paper and bank commission. The way in which the book is kept is peculiar, and saves an enormous amount of time and trouble. Instead of each cheque being entered in the books some half-dozen times, the total amount only of all the cheques paid out is placed in the books. And to avoid all risk, the cheques are so carefully indexed and put past, that ten years hence a cheque cashed now will be found quite readily; also, their cheques are cleared daily, thus avoiding the necessity of passing through the bankers' clearing-house.

Let us now enumerate some of the leading peculiarities of the system: (1.) No interest is allowed on deposits. (2.) It does not keep its own cash. (3.) It transacts no financial business whatever. (4.) Being intended only for small accounts (as no interest is given), it is essentially a bank for the million. (5.) It discounts no bills.

In considering the first of these, the question naturally arises—What are the great advantages gained which counterbalance the want of interest? We will briefly detail some of these, as this question is of primary importance.

As we mentioned at first, if an extended use of cheques could be brought about, an incalculable boon would be conferred upon British commercial interests, owing to the scarcity of gold. The Cheque Bank was established for this very purpose, and as a large quantity of the gold used in England is for payments below five pounds, the utility of the Cheque Bank in this respect is obvious. Unlike the other existing banks, this one encourages by every means in its power small accounts. To the artisan or retail dealer constantly making small payments, and to whom the interest on their deposits is of little moment, the Cheque Bank holds out great inducements, for by holding one of its cheque-books no end of trouble is saved. Now, anything that encourages the lower ten thousand to keep an account with the bank, and thus avoid the temptations to which they, with their pockets full of money, are exposed, it seems to us, is a national benefit.

Then the system is advantageous, from its being a costless and simple method of remitting money—being, in short, an introduction of circular notes into the home-field. The superiority of their cheques over Scotch notes is manifest. Whereas in England Scotch pound-notes are of comparatively little use, these cheques are as good in Scotland, or even in Ireland, as they are in London. Again, a pound-note is for a fixed sum—twenty shillings; these are 'promises to pay' for any sum according to the will of a holder of a cheque-book.

It will be interesting to see from what sources the revenue is derived, from which the shareholders are paid. (1.) There is the interest on the hundred thousand pound reserve fund invested in government consols. Large returns cannot be looked for here, as the best security, and not a high percentage, is sought. (2.) The dividends arising from the investment of the deposits. (3.) The interest on the money deposited daily in the banks with which it has opened credit. (4.) The balance of the shilling paid for each cheque-book, after deducting tenpence for stamps and the expense of the book.

Whether or not the Cheque Bank will be a

financial success, is a problem yet to be solved. But its principles seem exceptionally good, and we wish it well.

ODDS AND ENDS:

FROM DR ROBERT CHAMBERS'S SCRAP-BOOK.

AN UNENVIABLE FATE.—Relations are sometimes a torture. I have heard of some terrible cases of this kind. Take the following, which I lately (1845) learned about in London. Miss L—, a well-known poetess, had a silly and tyrannical mother. How difficult to believe that when the country was ringing with praises of the young lady's poem, the amiable authoress was dragged by the hair of the head by her mother to a garret, and there kept two days locked up, fed upon bread and water. Yet of this fact there can be no doubt. The tyranny of her mother obliged Miss L— to go to live in a boarding-school, where it was that a distressing scandal overtook her. A quiet home, under the protection of a judicious and kind parent, would have saved her from this evil, the blight of her life. Miss L— educated a brother for the church. Of L.300 which she received for a popular novel, L.200 were spent at once in paying debts foolishly contracted by this young man to enable him to go to a curacy in the country. He had not been six months in office when he was arrested for a debt of L.72 for a fashionable fowling-piece. Miss L— paid the debt, and expended some money besides in relieving him from the consequences of this folly; and all that she obtained of the proceeds of the novel for her own gratification was fifteen shillings, spent on a light dress and a few ribbons.

MARRIED OR UNMARRIED.—In a small work lately published (1843), it is asserted that if we were to make an abstract of the number of bankruptcies for the last dozen years, the majority would be found unmarried. The *Athenæum*, which quotes and challenges the statement, very properly points out that the directly opposite conclusion has been ascertained by statistical inquiry, not, it is true, in our own country, but in one differing from it in no great degree, namely, France. After advancing proofs of this from official documents, the *Athenæum* remarks: 'Children, a wife, or an entire family, then, figure for a great deal among the causes of debt; the married struggler with the world being manifestly borne down by the weight he thus carries.' It further appears that, of 1232 debtors confined in the Paris prisons during three years, 292 were under, and 940 above, thirty years of age; or by a different examination extending over five years, that of 2566 imprisonments, 673 of the prisoners were under thirty years of age, 1433 between thirty and fifty-one, and 440 of fifty-one and upwards. This shews, according to M. Bayle-Mouillard, that 'it is not when a man is young, when he has relations to assist him, or bequests to enjoy, that he is most liable to arrests; difficulties come upon him at a period of life when such resources fail, and after he has, probably, made unsuccessful attempts to get on in life—when, with a rising family, he has no longer a dependence on anything but his own unaided labour, and that labour rendered less efficient by age and infirmity.' This also, as the *Athenæum* remarks, 'is a most important consideration as

regards the morality of the entire question; it refutes volumes of declamation against the criminality of the unfortunate.'

SIR WALTER SCOTT was often annoyed with letters from young men asking his opinion of their poetical productions, for it imposed on him the disagreeable duty of sending answers which could not be quite agreeable to his correspondents. On one occasion, in blending friendly advice with what might be taken as a gentle remonstrance, he said: 'Sir—Although nothing can be so rare as that high degree of poetical talent which arrests in a strong degree the attention of the public, yet nothing is more general among admirers of poetry and men of imagination than the art of putting together tolerable, and even good verses. In some cases (and I am disposed to reckon my own among the number), either from novelty of subject or style, or peculiarity of information, even this subordinate degree of talent leads to considerable literary distinction; but nothing can be more precarious than the attempt to raise one's self from obscurity, and place empty and tantalising objects in the view, diverting the poet from those which fairly and manfully followed out, seldom fail to conduct worth and industry to comfort and independence. I by no means advise you to lay aside your taste for literature; it does you credit as a man, and very possibly as a man of talents. But those powers which can make verses, are applicable to the more useful and ordinary purposes of life. Your situation is at present dependent; but there is none so low from which patience, industry, and perseverance cannot raise the possessor of those excellent qualities.' This was written from Abbotsford in 1819.

WALKING OUT.

O'er Plewloy's green and pleasant height,
Across the fields towards Tabley Farm,
We wander in the fading light,
Two happy lovers, arm in arm.

Late thrushes in far thickets sing;
And, by unerring instinct led,
Far overhead stray widgeons wing
Morassward to their willow-bed.

A star burns in the faded west,
A ripely-red low-lying star,
And seems a watch-fire on the crest
Of some lone guardian hill afar.

Calm is the night, and soft, and sweet;
The earth is peaceful as the skies;
And from the field-flowers at our feet
Rich scents at every step arise.

Oh, joy supreme! oh, rare delight!
To realise the moment's charm
As we do, wandering here, to-night,
Infolded in Love's circling arm.

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THE VICISSITUDES OF A COLOSSAL FORTUNE.

WHEN Louis XIII. died in 1643, he left two sons, the eldest of whom became the noted Louis XIV.; and Philippe, the other son, was created Duke of Orleans, to whom, by his brother's munificence, large possessions were assigned. Ever since that beginning, the Orleans branch of the Bourbons has been a conspicuous family in France, in fact in Europe. The remarkable thing in their history has been their enormous wealth, sometimes diminished, sometimes enlarged, but always considerable through good fortune in marriages or by royal favour. The Duc de Chartres, son of Philippe, was already rich when he succeeded his father, and received the Palais-Royal as part of his marriage dowry. As second Duke of Orleans, he became Regent during the minority of Louis XV. and in this capacity made good use of his opportunities to bring it about that from the state, instead of the family coffers, should come the dowries of the daughters of his house—Mademoiselle de Montpensier and Mademoiselle de Valois.

The son and grandson of the Regent were not public characters, but they maintained the credit of the family for the faculty of absorbing state property. In 1751, letters-patent added the countship of Soissons and the estate of Laon to the Orleans acreage; and in 1766, the demesnes of Marle, la Fere en Tardenois, Ham, and St Gobain, were asked for, and granted, to round off the countship of Vermandois, which the Orleans family were desirous of reconstructing. But Philippe Egalité was not the man to live a life of opulent and dignified retirement. In him lived again the extravagance of the founder of the House. Philippe Egalité was the only rowdy of all the House of Orleans, and his head followed the fortune which was first impaired by his prodigalities and intrigues, and then forfeited by the edict of the Revolution.

On his father's death, Philippe Egalité seems to have succeeded to property worth five million francs a year; some authorities put it higher.

When he married the daughter of the Duc de Penthièvre, in whom, as the sole inheritrix, had centred the vast appanages of the bastards of Louis XIV. the fortunes of the two wealthiest Houses in France, and perhaps in Europe, became conjoined. With his wife, Philippe got from her father four million francs in hard cash; in the year of his marriage, Louis XV. made him the present of 100,000 francs; and in 1784 he sold to Marie Antoinette, for six millions, which were paid from the state treasury, the château of Saint-Cloud, itself originally crown, and therefore national property. In fact, nearly all the endowments of the Orleans family consisted of property bestowed one way or other by the crown.

But all this wealth melted like snow in the hands of the extravagant Philippe Egalité; and Philippe had to betake himself to the strengthening of his tottering fortunes by a great building speculation. He pulled his residence of the Palais-Royal to pieces, destroyed its privacy, levelled the garden, built the arcades of shops with which every visitor to Paris is familiar, and let house-room and building space to the highest bidders. The Palais-Royal, in the natural course of events, became a sink of iniquity, but the operation brought Philippe money in, and helped his political influence, by affording work to artisans and labourers, who knew the hand that fed them. But spite of the financial success of this speculation, Philippe became more and more embarrassed. And then came a law, passed 21st December 1790, which suppressed the system of appanages, recalled all these back to the crown whence they had emanated, and substituted for them the payment of a fixed annual sum from the treasury. When this law was passed, the annual revenues of the family of Orleans amounted to little short of nine million francs. In two years more it was gone to the last stiver, and the head of Philippe Egalité presently followed it.

This huge revenue was made up in various ways. Over six millions consisted of appanages; nearly a million and a half came from 'properties called patrimonial;' close on 100,000 francs were the produce of properties held under mortgage; and

1,145,000 francs were yielded by 'rents and interests.' Under the law of 1790, Philippe got, in exchange for the revoked appanages, an annual sum of two and a half million francs, in addition to a million as 'traitement'; and besides, the property of the Palais-Royal was exempted from the revocation. Philippe was left still a man of stupendous income, but his financial condition was desperate, and in the first days of 1792, he was compelled to call a meeting of his creditors, and offer them a composition. In August of the same year, came the abdication of Louis XVI.; a month later, the Republic; and presently *la Terreur*. Philippe Egalité, when his head fell into the sawdust, left behind him debts amounting to 74 million of francs. His property was put up to auction, and for the most part was bought by the state, which paid to his creditors (thereby virtually substituting itself for the same) a sum of 37,740,000 francs—a little over half the total amount.

The times had been hard with Louis-Philippe, the son of Egalité, when in the ranks of the emigration. He was pursued about Switzerland in the most uncomfortable and inhospitable manner. Even the monks of St. Gothard, whose profession it is to shelter all wayfarers and ask no questions, declined to take in this hapless Louis-Philippe, and he was everywhere 'moved on,' as if he had been a British casual without a settlement. Even when at length he seemed to have got rest for the sole of his foot, and had set himself industriously to teach a school at Reichenau, there presently came to him the inexorable summons to 'move on.' The narrative of all his wanderings over the north of Europe, and afterwards in America, and of how, after much reverse, he at length dropped his anchor for a while in our own suburban Twickenham, is too familiar to require telling here.

The first days of the Restoration of 1814 saw the sagacious Louis-Philippe, his wits sharpened by adversity, back in Paris, and pledging his devotion to the newly installed Louis XVIII. Louis took very kindly to his cousin, gave him the title of Most Serene Highness, and bestowed on him all that had not been sold of his father Egalité's appanage, which had been taken possession of by the state in the Revolution time. It has been estimated that this act gave Louis-Philippe a fortune of about one hundred million of francs. Certainly, he was the luckiest, financially, of all the returned *émigrés* of the royal house. It has already been told how a law, not a revolutionary law, but one passed while as yet Louis XVI. reigned, had abolished the appanages, and substituted therefore annual allowances. So far as concerned the senior branch of the Bourbons, this law was put in force. The Comte d'Artois did not re-enter on the possession of his appanage, but drew instead his stipulated allowance. No appanages were constituted for his sons, the Ducs de Berry and d'Angoulême. The Duke of Orleans alone, the future citizen-king, the champion of liberal ideas, the adversary of the ancient order of things, insisted on the resuscitation of feudal rights in his favour, when the reigning family made sacrifices to conform to the law. The king was to be still more generous to the fortunate ex-schoolmaster. Clearly, there should have fallen to be deducted from the patrimonial succession of the latter the 37 millions which the state had disbursed in part payment of

Philippe Egalité's debts; but this trifle never seems to have occurred to the king's mind, and Louis-Philippe did not consider himself called upon to call his relative's attention to it. He began a comprehensive series of lawsuits against the Treasury, against the administrators of royal domains, against the purchasers of national property, and against his mother, Madame Louise de Bourbon-Penthièvre, Dowager-duchess of Orleans. To support his case, he obtained, by royal permission, from the national archives the whole of the title-deeds and documents having reference to the old estates of the House of Orleans, in number over seventeen hundred. The Hundred Days came in to arrest the progress of this multifarious litigation, and the documents were returned to the archives; but upon the second Restoration, Louis-Philippe got them out again, and they have never since been restored. He recommenced his lawsuits, and pushed them on considerably, to the irritation of a considerable portion of the nation. Louis XVIII. became aware that his cousin's litigations were getting the royal family a bad name in the country, and finding that, for the assertion of some rights which some old parchments appeared to carry, he had raised an action against three hundred communes of the department of La Manche, which struck at a mass of about thirty thousand proprietors, he gave him a command to drop such litigation. Louis-Philippe did not disobey his kingly cousin; he desisted from the personal prosecution of the action, and disposed of the claims to a Company, who stood in his shoes, and fought out the action.

Charles X. on succeeding to the throne had the Orleans appanage included in the law which secured the civil list, and was further good enough to bestow the title of Royal Highness on his cousin, on whom fortune was certainly smiling from ear to ear; for not long before, his mother had died, and he had inherited her property, which as reconstituted by Louis XVIII. was worth some 26 millions. That the lady died so rich, was in the face of a French law which Louis had ignored. The whole of her possessions consisted of the appanage which had belonged to her father. But by an ordonnance of Charles IX. (1566), appanages were debarred from falling to the distaff, and in default of an heir-male direct, reverted to the state. The appanages of the Duc de Penthièvre, therefore, could not legally devolve on his daughter, and consequently could not legally pass to the son of that daughter. But Louis-Philippe pleaded prescription to all the claims that were out of date; for most of those which remained valid, he compounded at the rate of twelve per cent. His friends claim that he devoted ten million francs to this filial task, a sum considerably under a year's revenue of his properties.

The revolution of 1830 tumbled stupid old Charles X. off the throne, and raised to it Louis-Philippe in the character of a 'citizen-king.' Louis-Philippe might have been a Scotchman, he was so exceedingly canny. He did not object to becoming king, but he did not relish the notion of putting all his eggs into one basket. He was not unfamiliar with revolutions, and there might overtake him also a revolution. There is an article in the French constitution which merges in the crown, brings into the state coffers, all the private property of the prince or person who succeeds to the throne.

Louis-Philippe had an objection to allow this provision to operate in his case, and he determined to alienate his private estates, and step on to the throne a naked man. Already lieutenant-general of the kingdom, he was king *de facto*, although not so *de jure* for two days after, when, on the 7th of April 1830, he executed a deed conveying to his children, with the exception of the Duc de Chartres, who would be the heir-apparent to the crown, the fee simple of the whole of his private property, retaining to himself, however, the enjoyment of his *liferent*.

The question is, what was the value of the property which Louis-Philippe in this way made over to his younger children? According to the schedules in the registered deed of gift, the annual rental of the landed estates was only 1,365,523 francs. But there was no manner of doubt that, for other reasons, as well as the obvious one of diminishing the amount of succession duty to be paid, the value of the estates was stated at far too low a figure. Of the Commission which was intrusted with the duty of fixing the civil list of Louis-Philippe, two members, MM. Thouvenel and Cormenin, made an investigation into the value of the private property which had formed the subject of the deed of gift, and those gentlemen set down the annual revenue accruing therefrom—of which revenue Louis-Philippe had retained the usufruct—as amounting to the sum of 7,523,000 francs, which that king continued to enjoy until his dethronement in 1848, in addition to his civil list, which was fixed at thirteen million francs. In all, then, during his reign, Louis-Philippe was the recipient of funds to the amount of not less than half a milliard of francs, or one-tenth part of the indemnity paid to the Germans on account of the late war.

The family waxed yet richer by the death of the last of the Condés. His adoption of, and stupendous legacy to the boy Duc d'Aumale, the second son of Louis-Philippe, was unquestionably the result of a mean intrigue, on which it would be unpleasant to enter. This much at least may be asserted with considerable confidence, that if the Prince of Condé's life had not terminated when it did, a few days after the ex-reigning family quitted French soil, the Count de Chambord and not the Duc d'Aumale, would have been his heir.

The inevitable crash overtook Louis-Philippe, but his head did not follow his fortune, as had been the case with his father, Philippe Egalité. Fortune favoured him so far that he was able to pass over to England, where he found at least a pleasanter abiding-place in his old age than the American school-house which had been the refuge of his youth. One of the first acts of the revolutionary government was to sequester all the Orleans property. The decree which does this (February 26, 1848) is very sweeping in its terms; it applies to the belongings *'tant ceux de l'ex-roi, que ceux des membres de l'ex-famille royale.'* Later, the Orleans properties were formally declared forfeited, and confiscated for the benefit of the national treasury, by an ordinance of the Assembly passed on the 22d January 1852, a precedent being found in the confiscation of the property of the Bonaparte family by a decree of Louis XVIII. after the first Restoration. Two exemptions were made, but they cannot be considered of great importance

from a financial point of view—they were the Chapelle Ferdinand at Neuilly, and the family vault at Dreux. The ordinance added, that when this property—which, in truth, belonged to the state—was reclaimed, the Orleans family still remained in the possession of a capital sum of one hundred millions of francs, which was amply sufficient to maintain the dignity of their rank in a foreign country. It is not easy to see how the framers of the ordinance were able to arrive at a definite estimate of the amount of Louis-Philippe's salvages; but it was the universal opinion that he had made the most ample provision for the rainy day. It was understood that he possessed real estate both in Europe and America, and it was reported that he had realised heavily by investments on foreign bourses. On the other hand, there are those who say that the family went into exile comparatively needy, and had to be beholden to King Leopold of Belgium, who was son-in-law of Louis-Philippe, for an allowance towards their maintenance.

The Orleans estates having been confiscated, and restored to the state, whence, unquestionably, the larger proportion of them had originally emanated, opportunity was taken to dispose of most of them of national account. It has never been publicly stated what sums have been realised from the sale of those properties which have been disposed of, and various amounts—fifty millions, eighty millions, and one hundred millions of francs—have been named. There is reason to believe that the last figure is that most nearly correct. We may name eight of the principal estates, sold under the ordinance of 1852: The Château d'Aumale, with Park, forest, and dependencies, situated at Chantilly. This estate was covertly purchased by the Orleans family, through the medium of Messrs Coutts and Company, and the château was inhabited during a number of years of the Empire by a Mons. Tremouille, who, since the *déchéance*, has vacated in favour of the real owners. The Château and Park at Le Raincy, near Paris. The Château, Park, and farm at La Ferte Vidame, near Nogent-le-Rotrou, on the road Paris-Chartres. The woods of Rousseau and Ivry, near Paris. The Park and residence of Monceaux. The Park and residence at Neuilly. The Château, Park, and forests of Bisy. The forest of Vernon, near Evreux.

Four other large estates were partly alienated, namely: The property of Amboise, a castle which had been in the possession of the French royal family from the time of Charles VII. It was inhabited by Abd-el-Kader from 1847 to 1852. A portion of the forest of Bondy. The property near Joinville, including several forests, considerably damaged by the late war. The property and works of St-Dizier, near Chalons-sur-Marne. In addition to the above, five residences, situated in Paris and elsewhere, were disposed of at various times. Had the Empire lasted a little longer, it is probable that the last acre of the great Orleans property would have come under the hammer.

But, as we all know, in 1870 the wheel of fortune took another spin, and next year the members of the House of Orleans were no longer exiles. When the weightier matters of the state had been settled for the time, and as soon as the National Assembly had time to think of other things, a bill was introduced to its notice by the Minister of Finance of M. Thiers' government, the object of

which was the restoration to the Orleans family of such portion of the estates, which had been confiscated in 1862, as had not in the interval been sold on national account. This measure was strongly and, indeed, scurrilously opposed by the extreme Republican press; but M. Thiers appeared to consider it an act of common honesty, and he was supported by the Royalist and moderate Republican deputies. The Orleans family, it must be owned, acted throughout in the most seemly manner. It was not at their instance that the bill had been brought in; nor did they, at least openly, express any desire, one way or the other, with reference to its fate. It would be tedious to recapitulate the arguments used for and against it; it will suffice to say that the bill became law last year (1872), and the remnant of their possessions has been restored to the descendants of Philippe de France. Only two estates were handed over to them intact, having escaped the auctioneer, namely, the Château d'Eu, a property near Dieppe, which English people will remember in connection with the visit paid to Louis-Philippe by Queen Victoria in the early part of her reign; and the château and its surroundings at Dreux, the earliest home, as it is the last resting-place, of the House of Orleans. There is another small property at Lepaude, in the department of Creuse, but it is scarcely worth mentioning, as it yields no revenue. It would be impertinent to inquire closely into the revenue derived from these two 'salvage' estates, but it may be set down as being very considerable; and with their restoration into the possession of the Orleans family, ends the record of the strange vicissitudes of this colossal fortune.

THE LILY OF THE ALLEY.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II.—WITHIN THE FOLD.

Six months and more had elapsed. The scent that lay at Wapping had grown fainter and fainter, and at last had been lost altogether. Mrs Perks had not returned to Feathers Alley, and had not been heard of there; and the old gentleman, with many a sigh and self-reproach, had abandoned himself to utter despair.

It was a lovely, but a sweltering day in August, and the mellow sun glared down with all its might and shewed up all the hideousness of Leeds. Click-clack! click-clack! went the looms. Such is the music made by the town-bee, the busy human-bee; whilst the country-bee, the busy insect-bee, is humming gaily away in field and garden. The sun lit up in Leeds a spectacle that shewed the price men pay for victory upon the field of industry. The very air rained blacks; the road from Leeds to Bradford was the colour of a mourning garment. Everybody seemed to have a cough; it was caused by the irritation of the black particles swallowed. The maimed and the halt were to be seen in noticeable numbers; they were of all ages, and both sexes; they were those who had been wounded in the battle of industry. Here went a one-armed man; there went a child on crutches. The river was like a slush of liquid indigo, dotted over with clots of white scum; and the men who worked in it, and near it, had faces, and arms, and hands, and, so far as they were visible, bodies dyed with the stains of indigo.

But none of these, whether he or she were a cripple, or blue, or both, was observed to beg.

Very different was the appearance of the only three beggars to be seen in the thoroughfare called Briggate. They were very poorly clad, but sound of limb, and clean as paint.

They consisted of a middle-aged man, a middle-aged woman, and a very young child, a girl. Father, and mother, and daughter, most of the passers-by thought, if they thought at all about it.

The man had the misfortune, as it appeared from his eyes, and from a sort of certificate he wore round his neck, to be blind; but the woman, to judge from the way in which she swept every house from top to bottom with a glance, and at the same time had a sidelong look for every passenger, had eyes for two. The little girl, whether she and her companions were walking or stood still, kept her eyes almost constantly on the ground.

The child was a pretty, fairy-like little thing, and sang in a sweet voice snatches of hymns, whilst the man made a noise with a concertina, and the woman kept an Argus-like look-out for coppers. Now, the hymns that were sung were such as were familiar and grateful to thousands in Leeds, which abounds with dissenters; and many a mother, especially at the hour when the factories discharged their work-people, either summoned the little girl with a smile and a beck, or walked up to her, and in either case put money in her hand. And one who watched matters closely, might have seen the said money passed at intervals to the man and lodged in his pockets. One who watched matters closely, moreover, and who was near enough to hear what the man and the woman said confidentially, between the verses of a hymn, to the little girl, might have caught the sound of paternal and maternal admonition, couched in such terms as: 'Sing out, yer little wretch, or I'll warm yer;' or: 'You'll ketch it to-night, miss, and ketch it 'ot, too, if you don't look sharp.'

The warning to 'look sharp' had become necessary, because the little maid, from her habit of keeping her eyes upon the ground, had failed to see several proffers of coin and several beckoning hands.

So that her eyes were just now on the alert, and enabled her to see a vision which called a flush of vague expectation to her lovely pale face.

In the doorway of a most respectable shop stood an elderly lady. This lady was not dressed by any means in the prevailing fashion. She wore a brown straw bonnet, somewhat resembling a Quaker's; an ample brown veil was thrown back behind her head; a cap, not very unlike a widow's, fitted closely round her face; her dress was brown, and of rather common material; her white stockings were refreshingly snow-like in hue; her thick shoes were polished as if they were to be used as looking-glasses; and her ungloved hands were ringless, but fair, and soft, and plump. She had a somewhat severe aspect, the severity of which was not lessened by the spectacles she had on; but her expression was motherly withal, and her delicate face assumed quite a soft and winning smile as she beckoned to the little street-singer.

The little girl sprang forward at once, not hearing or not heeding her male companion, who, having whispered to the female, said sharply, but in a low voice: 'Let the lady be, and come along with us.'

Oddly enough, the lady had timed her beckoning so that an officer of the borough police came striding down the street just as the little child obeyed the summons; and oddly enough, the man and the woman simultaneously vanished down a side-slum.

The lady smiled grimly, but soon banished the grimness, as she asked the little girl: 'Were those your parents, my dear?'

The child hesitated, and then answered, almost inaudibly: 'Es, ma'am.'

'Look at me, child,' said the lady kindly. 'Do you know where little girls who don't tell the truth will go to?'

'No, ma'am,' replied the child.

'And I'm sure I can't tell you,' rejoined the lady with a sigh, and in a scarcely audible voice. 'But,' she went on in a louder tone, 'I will ask you again, and you must tell me the truth; will you?'

'Es, ma'am; I'll tell oo de troof.'

'Were those your parents?'

'No, ma'am.'

'Who were they?'

'I don't know, ma'am.'

'How did you come to be with them, dear?'

'O ma'am,' cried the child, bursting into tears, 'dey toot me—away—from mammy; p'ease, tate me back to mammy.'

By this time the police-officer had come up; had saluted the lady, who seemed to be well known to him; and, at her request, had remained at her side. She told him all she had seen; and she ended by saying: 'I shall charge the child with begging in the streets; and I can prove that she received money. You will know what to do with her at present; and to-morrow, when the proper inquiries have been made, I will take her in, if the authorities think proper.'

Next day, it was proved that two persons answering the description of the man and woman who had been with the little girl, and who were well known as tramps and beggars, had departed the evening before by train from Leeds, and had gone to some other part of the country. And it was decided that the little girl—from whom nothing definite could be elicited beyond the facts, that her name was Lily, and that she had lived in some alley in London—should be given up to the kind lady who had offered to take charge of her.

The lady took her to a house of moderate size on the outskirts of Leeds. In the house were two or three ladies dressed exactly as Lily's friend was. They addressed one another as 'Sister,' and they called Lily's friend 'Mother.' There were Sister Mary, and Sister Elizabeth, and Sister Dorcas; and Lily's friend was simply Mother.

'Another lamb come to the fold,' was the Mother's only introduction, as she led Lily into a simply furnished room, where the three Sisters sat at different kinds of useful work. They all three rose up and kissed Lily tenderly.

Then Sister Mary said: 'There's just one bed vacant, dear Mother. I will take the dear child up, and wash her and dress her, and shew her her little cot. What is her name, Mother?'

'Lily.'

'Come, then, Lily,' said Sister Mary gently, taking the poor child by the hand.

And Lily went like one in a dream.

Sister Mary took Lily into a pretty large, airy room, in which were five little cots, and a bed upon an iron bedstead, narrow, indeed, but long enough for a full-sized woman. The cots were for five little children, and the bed was for Sister Mary, who had the care of them. There were in the house two other rooms, in which two other batches of children, varying in age from seven to fifteen, slept; and each batch was under the ever-present superintendence of Sister Elizabeth and Sister Dorcas respectively. The Mother had a room to herself.

'This is for you, dear,' said Sister Mary, patting one of the little cots, and smiling at Lily.

'What for?' asked Lily timidly.

'To sleep in, darling,' answered Sister Mary.

'Sleep! Why, dere ain't no 'trow,' exclaimed the child, with wondering eyes.

'Did you always sleep in straw, my child?' asked Sister Mary compassionately.

The child nodded vacantly; and then said, as if to correct herself: 'S'ep't wi' mammy once.' And her large eyes filled with tears.

All this while Sister Mary had been choosing from a chest of drawers, in which there seemed to be all sorts of articles such as children wear, a little brown frock and other things of a size that should fit Lily, whom she now proceeded to divest of her tattered and scanty clothing. At once the child fell sobbing on her knees, and, catching tight hold of Sister Mary's dress, whispered: 'Oh, p'ease, don't; I *will* be good.'

'Don't what, dear?' cried the astounded Sister Mary.

'Oh, p'ease, don't beat Lily; p'ease, don't. I *will* be good, I *will* be good,' sobbed the trembling child.

'I, darling,' said Sister Mary tenderly; 'I wouldn't hurt you for the world. I'm only going to dress you properly.'

And she kissed the little creature, who soon submitted quietly.

But no sooner was the child thoroughly stripped than Sister Mary hid her face in her hands, and uttered a cry of horror, that brought up the good Mother.

'Oh, Mother, Mother!' cried Sister Mary, as the tears ran down her cheeks, 'do look at this poor little sufferer.'

Even the severe-looking Mother's eyes grew dim, and lips grew almost white, at the spectacle she saw. The poor child's body was bruised, and scored, and scarred, and hideous with unhealed wounds.

'The police sergeant told me that she was in a woful plight,' said the good Mother, 'but I had no idea it was so bad as this. I see the doctor applied some dressing last night.'

'Such a sweet, pretty little thing!' moaned Sister Mary.

'They kept her remarkably clean, however,' observed the Mother; 'I could see that, when I was talking to her yesterday.'

'Such lovely hair, and eyes, and complexion were worth more to them when kept clean,' suggested Sister Mary.

'Hush! hush!' said the Mother warningly: 'you forget that it is against the rules here to say anything that may breed vanity: we know nothing here of good looks, or the contrary. But now finish dressing the child; you have plenty of things in

the cupboard over there that you can apply to her wounds; and then bring her down-stairs.

In due course, Lily was dressed, taken down, and, it being the recreation-time, was led into a large garden, where the Mother and the Sisters, or as many of them as had not business which called them into the town, walked and conversed, and kept an eye on the children, who amused themselves after their kind. Of the children, there were about fifteen, all girls, and all 'waifs and strays,' whom the good Mother or her friends had sought in the highways and hedges, and compelled to come in, that her house might be filled. A few of these 'waifs and strays' were traced to, and restored to their friends; some remained, as Sisters Mary, Elizabeth, and Dorcas had, to assist the good Mother; others went into different businesses, when they were old enough; and others, not severing their connection with the 'home,' became, from a very early age, trained nurses, going through a course of drill at various hospitals in London as well as in the country, adopting the good Mother's distinctive style of dress, and assuming the style and title of 'Sister,' and sometimes, between the good Mother and other elderly persons and themselves, of 'Daughter.' Nobody was idle at the 'home,' as Lily discovered on the very afternoon of her arrival. Everybody had to do something; and everything was done under the vigilant supervision of the Mother and the three Sisters. And, if there were any truth in proverbs, they ought all to have become healthy, and wealthy, and wise.

At anyrate, the sun had not been very long off duty in Leeds on the day upon which Lily entered the 'home,' when the good Mother and the Sisters took their respective bedroom candlesticks and prepared for the rest which was to cease before 5 A.M. the next morning.

The four were laughing pleasantly; for the good Mother had been telling with grim humour how she had rescued Lily by watching the begging-party narrowly, guessing how matters stood, and biding her time for asking questions until she saw the police-officer coming.

'Poor little thing!' sighed Sister Mary; 'I wonder if we shall ever find her mother?'

'Ah!' said the good Mother, 'that depends upon a higher will than ours; meanwhile, let us rejoice that she is safe in the fold.'

Fourteen years or so had passed; and the old gentleman, without having heard any more of Mrs Perks, had been gathered to his fathers.

It was about ten o'clock at night; and the lamps were burning dimly in the many wards of a famous London hospital. Nearly every bed in every ward was occupied, and nearly every patient was unconcealed from view. But here and there had been erected all round some particular bed a tall framework, from which hung ample curtains. The hangings implied that they hid behind them a desperate, most likely a dying, case. They were intended to serve two humane purposes: to prevent the dying person from seeing anything that could cause annoyance or unadvisable distraction; and to save the other patients from the anything but healing influence of witnessing their fellow-patient's mortal agony.

As it struck ten, a young woman, whose youth, notwithstanding the thick brown veil that effec-

tually covered up her face, was attested by a figure and by movements which a rather clumsy cloak could not altogether disguise or materially impede, entered one of the wards swiftly but noiselessly, greeted the matron with a passing inclination of the head, and disappeared within the hangings round a certain bed.

She was the night-nurse, and she would be on duty until seven the next morning.

She first inspected the patient, who lay with closed eyes, was breathing stertorously, and appeared to be asleep. She then took off and hung up her bonnet and cloak; arranged the sleeping-draught and other medicines that stood on a little table by the bedside; sat down in a chair placed near the patient's pillow, drew from her pocket some needlework, and prepared to pass her long vigil. Inside the bonnet she had taken off there was fastened a frill, which had fitted tightly round her face from forehead to chin, and had given her an almost matronly appearance; but now as she sat, fresh and cool, with her hair exposed in all its beauty of soft and yellow ripples, with her large blue eyes bent modestly upon her work, with her snow-white collar turned over the top of her high brown dress, with her equally snow-white cuffs finishing off her long sleeves, with her busy fingers plying their task of needle-work, with her general air of patience and at the same time of alertness, and with her carefully trimmed and shaded lamp burning brightly at her side, she looked like one of the wise young virgins who waited to good purpose for the bridegroom's coming.

The patient was a gaunt, wan, hollow-eyed woman, who might have been any age beyond forty, whose features spoke as plainly as print of grief and hardship, and who bore unmistakably impressed upon her the stamp of death.

Fully two hours had elapsed since the young nurse's entrance; and for the last half-hour the patient had been lying motionless, but awake, watching with wistful, half-open eyes the sweet, angelic face bent over the piece of needlework.

The patient heaved a deep sigh.

In a moment the young nurse was on her feet; she gently raised the patient's head, and administered some cooling drops to the feverish lips.

'Who is it?' whispered the patient, trembling.

'Don't you know me?' answered the young nurse softly but cheerfully. 'I'm Sister Martha.'

'Ah!' muttered the patient, a little discontentedly; and then she said, pressing the nurse's hand: 'God bless you, my dear.'

'You've had a nice sleep,' said the nurse.

'Ah! and a sweet dream,' rejoined the patient in low, weak tones: 'I dreamed I'd found my little gal, after fourteen years of tramp, and trouble, and workus, and 'ospital.'

'You'll find her in a better world than this, Mother,' said Sister Martha, as she knelt by the patient's bedside.

'Mother!' ejaculated the patient with a look of astonishment. 'Ah!' she added listlessly, 'you told me that you call all old women Mother at the place you come from.'

'And they call us Daughter,' said the young nurse soothingly.

Once more the patient dozed; and the nurse resumed her seat and her occupation.

The night wore on, and the dawn approached:

it was the time when, as some say, the angels call, and the spirits of the dying can most readily respond. The patient began to move restlessly upon her bed, and once more the young nurse knelt down beside her. The patient murmured inarticulately, but the nurse could catch the sound of the word 'daughter'; and with that word upon her lips, and with her withered hand dropped helplessly upon the young nurse's fair head, the patient sighed one sigh of relief, and passed smilingly away.

Perhaps the nurse had spoken truly; perhaps the patient would find her daughter in a better world; perhaps in that world the problems of life would be solved, and an apparently unmerited martyrdom would be explained and rewarded; and perhaps Mrs Perks would there discover the meaning of her fourteen years' unsuccessful search and cruel trial, and recognise in Sister Martha the lost Lily of the Alley. For this life is but the forty years' wandering in the wilderness, during which all the wanderers suffered, but some suffered more than others.

GLACIERS.

THE account lately given of Principal Forbes and his Alpine explorations will have prepared the way for learning some few particulars regarding the origin and character of glaciers, and what influence these bodies have had in effecting changes on the surface of the earth.

Glaciers, as will be generally known, are so called from *glace*, the French term for ice. The old idea about them was, that they were hard frozen masses, which slid down from mountain heights, melting and breaking less or more in their descent. It is only in recent times, when accurate notions were obtained regarding them, that they were found to possess a strange ductile quality, like that of tar or pitch, which enabled them to turn and wind like a river down-hill among rocks and *débris*, until they reach the plains or seas, where they are melted. A glacier, then, is an ice-river, hard to appearance, but combining in its general mass a certain degree of natural pliability, impressed on it for some good purpose.

The origin of glaciers is, of course, the snow and frozen rain that fall on high mountain tops, at which lofty elevations—sometimes fifteen to eighteen thousand feet above the sea-level—there is not sufficient heat from the sun's rays to melt the glacial masses on the spot. Dr Tyndall, Professor of Natural Philosophy in the Royal Institution, London, who has written a pleasant elementary book, under the title of *The Forms of Water*, speaks of solar heat being the true origin of glaciers; and such, though it may seem paradoxical, is the case. The phenomenon is explained in this way. The sun, acting on the ocean within the tropics, causes an exhalation, which floats away as clouds to the polar regions, as well as to high mountain ranges, where in each case the clouds yield up their contents as snow or rain, the materials out of which glaciers are formed. Icebergs, the terror of mariners at certain seasons in the Atlantic, and often the cause of shipwrecks, are nothing but glaciers which have slid down from the mountains within the arctic circle, and slipped in huge broken masses into the sea. For a time they may remain crowded together, but the summer

heat, or action of the sea, detaches them, and so they set off southwards, down Baffin's Bay into the Atlantic, floating and tumbling about, the size of large and small islands, until they are gradually melted. Similar phenomena take place in the southern polar seas. On a smaller scale, the same thing is seen in early summer on some of the high-lying lakes of Switzerland. Into these sheets of water, glaciers which have slid from the mountains float about like miniature icebergs until dissolved by the increasing warmth of the season.

Whether at the polar regions or elsewhere, the glacial masses that finally fall from heights are by no means of fresh conformation. It may have been years since they were deposited as snow and frozen into ice. The manufacture of glaciers, so to speak, is always going on. The ice-river is ever assuming shape at the upper, and breaking off or melting at the lower, end; the rate of progress of the glacial stream and final dispersion depending on the nature of the declivity, along with seasonal and other influences. Alpine explorers are well acquainted with the process of formation at different stages. The snow that clothes the higher peaks falls in avalanches into the hollows forming the upper part of the mountain valleys. These hollows may be compared to the hoppers of a mill, into which the grain is poured for grinding. In these basin-like receptacles there is always an accumulation, summer and winter, of old and new snow, which becomes a partially hardened mass, called *névé* by the French-speaking inhabitants of Savoy. *Névé* is the rudimentary condition of ice formed by pressure applied to snow. We have a familiar example of this in squeezing and kneading a snow-ball, when the snow happens to be at or near the melting-point. By extreme pressure, as, for instance, by the Bramah hydraulic press, snow may be transformed into solid blocks of ice, a fact not sufficiently taken advantage of by persons wishing to have ice ready at hand in winter.

A collection of *névé* presents all the conditions of ice-manufacture on a large scale. There is, first, a store of snow of the proper temperature: for, if we suppose its temperature at the outset to be lower than the freezing-point, it is constantly permeated during the summer months by water trickling through it from the melting surface; and this water, by freezing partly, and thus giving off latent heat, soon raises the whole mass to the temperature of 32° Fah. This temperature once attained, remains constant, because the greatest cold of winter does not affect the mass of *névé* to a greater depth than it does the earth, if even so deep; so that summer and winter the manufacture can go on. Secondly, there is a power always at work, equal to that of hundreds of Bramah presses; a power arising simply from the weight of the parts above—often hundreds of feet deep—pressing upon the parts below. This is the force that welds the original snowy particles into a solid transparent substance; and it is the same force, the pressure of its own weight, that urges the solidified mass down the valley to its final destination.

The belief that a glacier was a solid, hard body, without a tendency to bend and adapt itself to the turnings in its downward course, was inconsistent with any rational theory; for, without the ductile quality, glaciers would, in sinuous valleys, never have slid down at all, but accumulated on the spot till they formed mountains of ice. Their ductility is a

wise provision of nature to get rid of them. Yet, it was long before this was understood. The first hint as to glacial flexibility was given exactly a hundred years ago by M. Bordier of Geneva, in an account of his journey among the glaciers of Savoy. Still, the hint offered on the subject did not arrest attention, even if generally known; and it was left for the Rev. M. Rendu, a Roman Catholic priest, who became Bishop of Annecy, to refer more definitely to the principle of glacial flexibility. In a paper laid before an Academy of Sciences in Savoy in 1841, he compared the motion of a glacier to that of a river winding its way between its banks with greater velocity at the middle than the sides. Acquainted with these views of Rendu, Principal Forbes comes on the scene in 1842, and at once, by careful measurements, settles the matter to the satisfaction of the scientific world. He established the fact that 'a glacier is an imperfect fluid, or viscous body, which is urged down slopes of certain inclination by the natural pressure of its parts.'

The Mer de Glace above Chamouni, which was the scene of Forbes's explorations, is the greatest of all the glaciers of the Alps, and may be taken as a type of glaciers in general. English tourists in summer, proceeding in carriages from Geneva to Chamouni, make this celebrated glacier an object of a day's amusing excursion. Streaming down a broad valley in the mountains, it looks like a rugged river of ice, the more remarkable for being seen to pursue its way amidst woods and fields bright with verdure. It is formed by the junction of three tributaries, two of which present the sublime spectacle of an ice cascade. There is also a cascade at the termination of the main stream, which is regularly visited by travellers. The length of the ice-stream from the *névé* of the longest tributary to the termination in the valley of Chamouni is eight or nine miles, and the breadth is over half a mile. To the eye, its motion is not observable, and it is only by means of daily markings in relation to the rocky margin that the motion of the mass is ascertained. The rate of flow is very various. The middle of the main stream moves in summer about twenty inches in twenty-four hours—for the sake of memory, we may say, an inch in the hour. In winter, the velocity is about half as much. It is only what we should expect, that the rills of water permeating the mass in all directions in summer would promote its semi-fluid motion. But the absence of this lubrication in winter does not arrest the flow, as was at one time assumed, although it renders it less. In the tributaries, too, the motion is slower than in the main stream. So slow is the general progress, that the snow falling at the farthest-off source takes, according to the best calculation, one hundred and twenty years to reach the valley of Chamouni.

Slowly creep, creeping, and here and there rising in jagged peaks, the glacier is a study. There may be said to be a constant interchange of condition going on, from melting to freezing, and freezing to melting, according as pressure is increased or relaxed, or as seasonal influences operate. The process of 'regelation,' as it is termed, takes place rapidly when the compressing force is great, but a very slight pressure between two wet surfaces is sufficient when a considerable time is allowed. Though bearing to be squeezed, ice is very impatient of stretching, and breaks at once if

suddenly bent. Hence the clefts or *crevasses* that form in glaciers, wherever the declivity of the bed alters. Clefts are often of great extent, as wide sometimes as twenty, fifty, or more feet, and mostly of a depth from a hundred to two hundred feet. They constitute a great danger to pedestrians on the glaciers, especially when they are concealed by quantities of fresh fallen snow, and there is scarcely a season in which they are not the cause of lamentable catastrophes. To guard against the treachery of the surface, guides, with the frequent use of the alpenstock, is necessary. But all sometimes will not do.

As seen in these clefts or yawning crevasses, the ice is of remarkable crystalline clearness and of a deep-blue colour. To a person who can approach and look with due caution into one of these chasms, the sight is one of the grandest and most beautiful in nature. Neither the colour nor the texture of the ice is perfectly uniform. It presents a veined structure, as if constructed of laminae of varying tint and structure like chalcidony. These laminae, which generally have a vertical position, are supposed to present a record of the gradual formation and movement of the parts.

The surface of a glacier is not equally beautiful with its interior. It is strewn with rocks, dirt, and debris, brought down in its course. Heaps of the rubbish deposited like long mounds at the sides and terminal points of the ice-streams, are called *moraines*. The remains of ancient moraines are seen in innumerable parts of the world, and a description of them has been a fertile theme for geologists. In some instances, the rubbish brought down by glaciers and the streams that flow from them, have so far filled up lakes as to reduce them to the character of a river. It seems probable that, from causes of this kind, the Lake of Geneva will ultimately disappear, leaving only the Rhone flowing between green fertile banks.

Glaciers give rise to another phenomenon. The angular pieces of hard rocks embedded in the mass graze and scratch the rocky bottom and sides of the ice-stream, leaving grooves or striae as a memorial of glacier action for all future times. In this way, a glacier is a vast polishing-machine, compared to which the works of man in that line are poor indeed.

Rocks so smoothed and furrowed are not confined to the regions of existing glaciers. Their occurrence is so frequent, and their origin so unmistakable, as to enable geologists to affirm that in regions where glaciers are now unknown, every valley, at one period of the history of the earth, was filled with a stream of ice. What glaciers do, however, is not confined to these markings, or to the deposit of moraines. As floating icebergs, they carry with them erratic blocks of stone, which, being dropped into the ocean, and they become known as boulders. The rounding off of their angular parts is understood to be mainly due to their rubbing on rocks in their glacial progress. When of a small size, lying on the sea-shore, they also get rounded by rolling about among each other. Where seas have shifted and left dry land, boulders are seen in various quarters, lying composedly on plains and hill-sides hundreds of miles away from the place of their origin, and forming a striking feature in the landscape. They abound on sea-shores, and stud the plains of Northern Germany in a very

picturesque way. One of the largest known erratic boulders is that which was found on a marshy plain near St Petersburg, weighing fifteen hundred tons, and now forms the pedestal in that city for a statue of Peter the Great. The process of depositing boulders is going on from the coast of Greenland, whence icebergs are carrying them, and dropping them in the Atlantic. When that ocean shifts its bed, they will be found by the geological inquirers of long future ages.

LADY LIVINGSTON'S LEGACY.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—HUNTED DOWN.

In all Whitborne, itself one of the prettiest and dullest watering-places on the English south coast, there was perhaps no house so prettily situated as that of Philip Dashwood's widow. There were other mansions more pretentious, no doubt, but none prettier than the Dingle, with its high banks draped by the greenest turf, its garden glorious with fuchsias, and roses, and myrtles, its miniature dells full of graceful fern, and the grateful shade of its spreading sycamores. There was a steep descent, clothed with hazel trees, from the western boundary of the little demesne, to where the clear swift Whit babbled and tinkled in the ravine below, on its passage to the sea. And of the sea itself there were glorious glimpses visible between the high banks and the leafy boughs. The peaceful quiet of the place was well suited to a wounded spirit; and Mrs Dashwood, a childless widow, for whom social life had lost its zest, had felt her grief gradually lose somewhat of its first poignancy under the soothing influences of the spot which she had selected for her home.

Early on the afternoon of the day which had witnessed the decisive quarrel between Aphy Larpet and Violet Maybrook, a housemaid of Mrs Philip Dashwood's, going on some errand to the little town, observed a lady, a stranger to her, and apparently to the place, hovering about the limits of her mistress's little territory, and glancing, as if in hesitation, at where the white cottage, overgrown with ivy and blossomed creepers, was visible between the trees. Housemaids, very naturally, seldom care very much about any female faces excepting that which the looking-glass shews them as they adjust their coquettish caps; but Mrs Dashwood's Sarah was often heard afterwards to say that she had never before seen any one half so lovely as the strange lady in question, though there was something in her look which, so Sarah averred, made her blood run cold. But this may probably have been an impression due to after-events. Certain it is that when the girl returned from her mission she was surprised to see the beautiful lady still hanging about the inclosure, until, becoming conscious of the hand-maiden's observation, she abruptly rang the bell at the wicket-gate, and asked, first for Miss Fleming, and then for Mrs Dashwood.

Mrs Dashwood, it so happened, was from home, and her visitor was with her; in fact, the beauty of the day had tempted the widow and her young friend to drive over to the ruined castle of Greystoke, which, as every one knows, is the chief lion, archæologically, of that country-side.

'Then, if you please, I will wait. Mrs Dashwood has known me for a long time, and my name is Miss Maybrook,' said the stranger; and she was

forthwith inducted into the cool drawing-room of the cottage, where, through the open windows, came the drowsy hum of the bees that were busy among the blossoms of the creeper trained over the flower-embosomed verandah outside.

A long time—some ninety minutes, perhaps, of our mortal division into measures which we call days, hours, and so forth, of what is our only real worldly possession, existence—did Violet pass, un-murmuringly, in that shaded drawing-room of the Dingle. There she stayed, patiently. We are often patient, when quickest action is demanded. Violet Maybrook, sitting quietly there, under the roof of her former friend and patroness, was at least full of strong young life, daring, beautiful, winning; not fit to die. Yet there she sat, mechanically hearkening to the ticking of the clock, but never once reflecting that every beat of the pendulum, every advance of the slow-moving dial-hand, might bring nearer and nearer yet the final moment of despair. Flight, prompt, well-planned, boldly executed flight, would have been her truest wisdom. She was young and fair, and life should have been dear enough to her to make her a careful steward of that priceless boon which we lavish so freely. But there she staid, waiting, waiting, while nearer and nearer, surer and surer, crept on the destined hour of misery and of doom. Violet Maybrook should at least have had the instinct of the hunted creature that cannot rest when the hounds are plunging into the brushwood, and that sniffs the tainted wind, and flees. Yet there she sat, waiting.

At last came the roll of carriage-wheels, and then the tread of feet and the sound of voices, and Mrs Dashwood and Beatrice Fleming came into the room. 'Miss Maybrook!' 'Violet!' said the two voices, in accents of surprise, and she who was addressed started as from sleep to return the greeting. Beatrice did but extend her hand; but the widow came warmly forward and kissed Violet on the cheek, twice. 'You dear, good girl!' she said: 'this is kind indeed!' Violet Maybrook, as she felt the touch of Mrs Dashwood's lips upon her own soft cheek, flushed crimson, and a sharp shuddering thrill ran through her, and then she grew pale again, and leant heavily on the back of the chair beside her, as if for support. 'It is nothing,' she said faintly, in answer to Mrs Dashwood's inquiry as to whether she were ill; 'a mere nothing. Perhaps, as the old saying is, some one was walking over my grave.' And she smiled, but not in mirth, and her strength seemed to return to her. 'You wonder to see me here, unasked,' she said; 'nor must I take credit for having come here solely to see my old friend and kind employer. It is on Miss Fleming's account that I have thought fit to present myself at Whitborne. Mrs Dashwood has heard, I have no doubt, sufficient of the lost will—Lady Livingston's, I mean,' she added.

'Has anything come to light concerning it?' asked Mrs Dashwood eagerly. 'I wrote to Mr Glegg, three days since, and had his answer this morning to the effect that he'—

'Mr Glegg, dear Mrs Philip Dashwood, knows no more about the matter than does the coachman who drove you to-day to Greystoke Castle,' interrupted Violet. 'There is only one person, besides myself, who does know anything of the will's being in existence, so far as I can tell. And that

person— Were you not surprised, Mrs Dashwood, perhaps a little shocked, too, to hear that I had set up housekeeping in London with an old acquaintance of both of us—Aphrodite Larpent?’

‘I was surprised, as you say, Violet,’ returned the widow gravely: ‘grieved too, my dear. I have not long been aware that Miss Davis and this wretched girl, Aphy Larpent, were one and the same. I had indeed written a letter of remonstrance to you, Violet, dear, and there it lies in my desk; but, knowing your pride, my dear, as well as I know your purity and your noble, unsuspecting nature, I felt a little nervous about sending it. So now you know the truth, and, after all, I am sure your motive in taking so singular a step was a good and generous one.’

She was not given to harsh judgments, this widow of Philip Dashwood. Her very aspect—soft, kind woman that she was—told of a spirit that woe had saddened, but not soured. No doubt but that she had been pretty in youth, and even now she was comely, though the last year had scattered many a streak of white hair among the dark, glossy braids, which time had left unchanged until her grief grew to be well nigh more than she could bear. It was a very pleasant face still, in spite of the traces of care—one of those faces that it is good to see beside a sick-bed, and that are scarcely less welcome in their unselfish sympathy with our prosperity. She was attired in the deepest mourning, but hers was a chastened sadness, and the smile that occasionally played about her lips was very gentle. Oddly enough, after one keen glance, Violet had preferred to look at the wall, at the pictures, at Beatrice Fleming, at anything but the face of worthy Mrs Philip Dashwood.

‘The person,’ resumed Violet, ‘who shares my knowledge of the existence of the document is, in all probability, the person who stole it. If not the thief, which I strongly suspect, she was at least the receiver of what was thus stolen. You know that Aphy Larpent was in the room with Lady Livingston when she died, engaged, as she declared, in sorting papers. The death was sudden, and the alarm was given by the one person present when it occurred. A very short delay would have given time to rifle some desk or drawer in which prying eyes might have discovered that the will was lodged. There is no need to recur to the theory that the street robbery of Mr Goodeve, the lawyer, had anything to do with the matter. But be that as it may, the will passed into the keeping of Aphrodite Larpent. I, her guest, perceived that she had something—what it was, I speedily guessed—to conceal. It was the very feverishness of her anxiety that first aroused my suspicions. She was constantly assuring herself of the security of her hidden treasure. As often occurs, her cunning and her care served to over-reach herself. I found out the drawer in which the precious packet was deposited, and by the help of false keys’—

‘You, Miss Maybrook!’ exclaimed Beatrice incredulously.

‘Of false keys,’ repeated Violet with cold persistency, ‘I obtained, when a final quarrel between my old schoolmate and myself seemed imminent, possession of this valuable paper. Does not the end justify the means? To you, Miss Fleming, it means the restitution of the inheritance wrongfully snatched away. To myself, it implies the punishment of her whose greed is baffled now, and—

Did you not hear wheels coming towards us, very fast?’

But neither Beatrice nor the widow had heard the wheels, nor could they withdraw their thoughts from the astounding news they had just heard.

‘Then, if so, where is the will? And why, if you suspected in what keeping it was, Violet,’ said Mrs Dashwood, ‘did you not adopt more creditable means to’—

‘To get the document out of the clutch in which it was, you would say?’ broke in Violet scornfully. ‘Yes, I might have applied to the attorney; and the probabilities are that, at the first intimation of mischief, the paper on which hangs so much would have been burned into a mere feathery heap of ashes. I acted, instead of talking, and the property is saved.—I was certain I heard wheels—they are nearer now.’ So they were, but yet so distant that none but an ear sharpened by nervous tension to an unnatural pitch could have caught the sounds when Violet’s senses had first become cognisant of them.

‘Then what,’ Beatrice began timidly, ‘have you done, since you’—

‘Since I robbed the robber, you imply?’ returned Violet impatiently. ‘My single action has been to hasten here. They are coming now, in that carriage, whoever they may be. Remember this, and this only—that I came to-day to do justice, and that without reward, or hope of reward. I have restored Heavitree and its annual thousands to the proper owner. Bear that in mind, whatever you may hear of me, whatever’— She ceased speaking, and seemed to listen.

‘You talk wildly, dear Violet,’ said the widow, looking anxiously in the pale beautiful face. ‘And where is the will?’

‘It is here,’ answered Violet quickly; and as she spoke, she threw upon the table a weighty packet, still in its outer wrapping of thick bluish paper, and with the seal intact. There could be little doubt about its character, for the envelope bore, conspicuously, the endorsement: ‘Last Will and Testament of the Dowager Lady Livingston,’ with the date of its execution. The wheels were very near now, coming furiously on.

‘And now I go,’ said Violet abruptly; but even as she turned towards the door, the carriage without seemed to come to a sudden stop; there was the sound of voices in the garden, of hasty feet upon the gravel of the path, the clang of the gate-bell, and the hurrying of servants, who seemed to feel, as by instinct, that something different from the quiet monotony of every-day life was about to occur. The steps were in the passage now; there was a low hum of talking, and almost immediately afterwards the door of the drawing-room opened, and a maid-servant thrust in her white, frightened face: ‘O ma’am, here is’— Sarah began thus, when she was gently, but irresistibly pushed aside by a strong arm, and the tall, rigid form of Superintendent Starkey of the detective police appeared on the threshold. What, too, was the slight, elfish figure that followed?—worlds of malignant triumph in the cruel smile, in the glowing eyes, in the steady fixity of gaze, as if Aphy Larpent had been no creature of flesh and blood, but the goblin gnome that she looked to be. The instant that her eyes rested on Violet’s impassive beauty, she had laid her hand upon the detective’s arm, and whispered in his ear. And Superintendent Starkey, with a stiff bow, and a

muttered sentence of apology for his intrusion, strode across the room.

'Miss Violet Maybrook?' he said, somewhat less glibly than usual. 'Yes; I thought so. My prisoner, then, by virtue of this warrant, in Her Majesty's name; and pray, remember, as it is my duty to inform you, that whatever you say will be used against you on your trial.' And he stood very close to Violet, not touching her, but in evident watchfulness of her every movement.

'Of what am I accused?' asked Violet boldly, but after a dreadful pause.

'Of wilful murder,' was the answer. 'A painful thing to say it, miss; but right's right, and I must do my office. Whatever you say will be used against you.'

CHAPTER XXXVII.—APHRODITE TELLS THE STORY.

Murder! the grim name for a grim deed, has a ghastly fascination in its very sound that few other words in our language possess. This crowning crime, like Milton's bad archangel, stands apart from all the baleful sisterhood of sins, and those who lie under the ban of it appear to the fancy of the spectators to be invested by a lurid atmosphere of their own, a blood-red haze that cuts them off from wholesome humanity. But such an accusation, brought against one so bright, frank, and fearless as Violet Maybrook, could not readily obtain credence, and after the first moment of speechless surprise, incredulity succeeded to astonishment.

'It is impossible; I do not believe it,' exclaimed Beatrice; while the widow was even more indignant at such a charge against her young friend.

'This must be some dreadful mistake,' she said, coming round to Violet's side, and taking her cold hand between her own; 'either that, or a base and wicked calumny, such as might be looked for,' she added, with an angry glance towards Aphrodite Larpent, 'from such a quarter.—My dear, poor darling!' she went on tenderly, 'it is no wonder that she should be thunder-struck at such an infamy as this.'

And thunder-struck indeed did Violet Maybrook at first appear to be. She had rehearsed, in thought, many a time, such a scene as this, and considered how she should act, how speak, in certain contingencies. But now the actual hour had arrived, the reality was so much more terrible than the anticipation of it had been, that she was quite silent and passive.

'Speak, Violet, and tell them—tell us that you know not what they mean!' said Mrs Dashwood, passing her arm round the girl's waist, as if to assure her of her support. 'This person is, I suppose, an officer of justice?'

'Superintendent Starkey, of the detectives, madam,' answered the tall man in the tightly buttoned surtout; 'and I have authority for what I do—a painful duty, I assure you. If you will take the advice of a man who has had twenty-five years' experience of family affairs, you will rather persuade this young lady to come quietly along with me, and reserve her defence, than to say what must come to be repeated at the Central Criminal Court. That's always the proper plan—reserve your defence—if you'll believe me.'

'Such counsel may be good for guilty wretches who seek to elude deserved punishment,' cried Mrs Dashwood, all her woman's nature in a glow of indignant sympathy; 'not for a girl like this,

whom I have loved as my own daughter almost, and who has been justly esteemed and prized from childhood upwards by those who knew her. She is a stranger here in England, but I can vouch for her innocence. Innocence! it is an outrage to question it when such a charge is brought. Am I to understand, by Miss Larpent's intrusion here, that *she* is the accuser?'

'She is the witness, certainly. We don't look to her to prosecute, but she furnishes the evidence on which the crown will rely,' answered the policeman, with an awkwardness not usual with him, as if his mind were preoccupied by some anxiety which he could not readily relieve.

'This must be some horrible deception, or some extraordinary error, I am sure of it,' said Beatrice, looking from one face to another. 'No one could have led a more harmless, quiet life, since she came to England, than Miss Maybrook's, to my knowledge, has been.'

'Tell them!' said Aphy harshly, and pointing with her finger towards Violet, who remained marble-white and mute, as if frozen into ice.

'The charge concerns what was alleged to have been done in Canada,' said the detective, reddening, and shuffling with his large feet. 'Now, indeed, Mrs Dashwood, you had better leave us to settle it without you—indeed you had.'

'In Canada! Violet accused of such a crime there!' exclaimed Mrs Dashwood. 'This is a mere impudent fabrication. It must be due to spiteful anger at Miss Maybrook for restoring the stolen will.'

'The will!' almost shrieked Aphrodite Larpent, as her pale face changed to a livid hue, and her restless eyes roved from face to face, as if to seek an explanation.

'The will! ah, true; I had forgotten that,' said Violet, breaking silence for the first time. 'Yes, I restored the will, and the result is, as you see, that she who purloined it brands me as a—murderess.' There was something unnatural in the calm, passionless tone in which these words were uttered, more as if they had been spoken by a sleep-walker than by a sentient human being face to face with so horrible an accusation, which painfully impressed the by-standers.

'You are not yourself at this moment, dear Violet,' said Mrs Dashwood apologetically, as it were, for the strange stoicism of her whose cause she was defending; 'and can hardly realise the full bearing of this shameful charge.—Yes,' she continued, turning to the policeman, 'Lady Livingston's will, of the loss of which you have very likely heard, is here.' And she lifted the heavy packet from the table where it lay, that the detective might read the endorsement. With a kind of cry like that of a bird of prey, Aphy Larpent darted forward, as if to snatch the document from the widow's hand; but with a rapid revulsion of feeling, she checked herself, and with a vengeful glance at Violet, resumed her former attitude of expectancy.

'This is a find!' said the superintendent excitedly. 'Well, well! after all our pains and all our search, to light upon it here, of all places! It is worth taking care of, ma'am, now you have got it; and if you'll permit me to suggest, I should say that Mr Glegg ought to be communicated with, by the wires, this very day. Not a moment should be lost, with so much money turning on it. Why, that very will my brother-officer has been tracing high and low, down Yorkshire way first, then

across the Herring-pond, and now, lo and behold! the game is over, and there is nothing left but to— I forgot! And indeed, in his surprise at the discovery of the will, the honest detective had allowed the actual object of his presence in that place to escape his memory. He winced as he remembered the work in hand, and his voice was not so steady as usual as he resumed: 'But duty must be attended to.—Now, Miss Maybrook, you are a lady of education, and sense, and spirit, and don't need to be reminded by a half-taught man like me that circumstances often look suspicious enough to warrant investigation, and yet afterwards are cleared up to the satisfaction of all. That's the use of lawyers, to piece and patch together this little thing and that little thing, and get date and place right; and they can do it, being cool about it, much better than principals can. So, if you'll come with me, Miss Maybrook, and, as I said, reserve your defence until you have professional advice, it will be much the best. You have no harsh treatment to apprehend, and nothing arbitrary. It's your right, if you choose, to be taken before a county magistrate, who will examine my warrant, and back it if he thinks fit; but if you'll believe me, to come quietly back to London will be your wisest plan and the pleasantest.'

It was plain that the superintendent was exceedingly desirous to get Violet away from the room and the house without prolonging the conversation, and it was evident, too, that his purpose was not unkindly. It was absolutely an imploring look which he addressed to Aphrodite as the latter raised her forefinger and shook it tauntingly at Violet Maybrook, saying, in a voice that sounded like the croak of a raven: 'Tell her—tell them, who was the victim, and what the crime, or I must.'

These words produced a fearful effect on Violet, who recoiled a pace or two, shaking herself free from Mrs Dashwood's encircling arm. The dead could scarcely have been more death-like in their pallor than was her beautiful face now, and it was in a broken and hollow voice that she said to the superintendent: 'Yes, lead me away. See, I will go quietly; I am ready. Chain me, if you will'—and she held out her clasped hands as if to receive the steel manacles—'but spare me—spare her.' And her haggard gaze turned furtively towards the widow, who trembled, without knowing why, as did Beatrice Fleming.

'You are driving the poor thing mad, and she wanders in her speech,' said Mrs Dashwood; for the first time admitting within herself that the hideous accusation might be true. Aphrodite Larpent, intent upon the scene before her, laughed; such a laugh as fiends might utter when the tempted succumb to their evil influence!

'Will you tell her, sir, or shall I?' she demanded, inexorably.

The superintendent answered by an oath, which we will hope shared the fate of Uncle Toby's honest expletive, and was not registered against him by the recording angel.

'I'll do it,' he said, with a groan, 'since needs must, and better it should come from my lips, after all, than that of yonder jade,' jerking his elbow towards Aphrodite.—'Mrs Dashwood, I'm compelled to speak out, though, Heaven knows, I sought to be tender with your feelings, though, of course, the bad news could not be long concealed. Your poor little boy, that was accidentally drowned'—

'Charley, my boy! My dead, only darling!' exclaimed the widow, scarcely able, with her white lips, to frame the words. 'What can you have to tell me of him, cruel that you are!'

'Well! he didn't come to his death by fair means—that is alleged, at least, not proved, of course!' added the officer rapidly. 'The charge against Miss Maybrook is that of murder, since she, being his governess, and alone by the river-bank, out in Canada there, is said to have'—

'To have thrust him from the bank to perish. These eyes saw it done!' hissed out Aphrodite Larpent. 'I was near enough, unseen myself, behind the green sumach bushes, to see yonder cold-blooded murderess do the deed. Oh, it was horrible! I am bad enough, but I could not have found it in even my heart to be the butcher of that pretty lamb, that clung to her, screaming in fear and wonder, and begging her, with a babble of loving words—for he loved her, as you all did—"not to be angry with Charley, not to hurt Charley, not to kill"—' That was the last word that reached me, and it was spoken as she forced him down, for the second time, into the cruel flood below; for he had struggled hard for his little life, poor child, and his golden curls were all wet and dragged as he clung to the bank, and tried to grasp the dress the murderess wore—his blue eyes wild with terror, and his innocent face upturned. I ran forward, calling to my brother, Bruce, who was walking somewhat behind me; but I was not in time to obey my first impulse, and to save him. No! When I came up, aid was of no use. The little corpse was already the sport of the rapids, as the swift water swept it swirling among the eddies and the shoals; and was found far down the river, as you know. A black, base, cruel deed! To harm that pretty boy was what the worst ruffian from the frontiers would scarcely have done; and yet he was murdered, wilfully, coldly, and of set purpose, and that by the dear teacher, the dear friend, whom, next to his mother, he loved! That I made a wicked bargain to conceal the murder, in consideration of Violet Maybrook's lavish promises of money, influence, help through life, is true. I am not here to defend myself, or to gloss over my own conduct. Bruce had been attached to the girl, who never had deigned to smile on him, and he, too, was urgent with me not to bring her to disgrace and punishment. The mischief was done. To denounce yonder monster would not have brought Charley Dashwood back to life; and it behoved lost Aphy Larpent, shunned and flouted by the respectable and virtuous, to make for herself what friends, or rather what instruments, she could. I repeat, the murder was a deliberate one. There was no accident, no sudden impulse of anger; all was coolly planned. The Irish nurse, on whom the blame fell, did indeed indulge in liquor at the farmhouse, but her drink, thanks to the adroitness of Violet Maybrook, was drugged, and her lingering to sleep off its effects on the verge of the forest, was calculated beforehand. Never yet'—

A shriek, long, wild, heart-rending, burst from the unhappy mother as she heard these last words, and realised their full import. As the dreadful narrative proceeded, she had listened, speechless with agony and half-incredulous horror, still hoping, with the hopefulness which sometimes dulls the edge of great suffering, that the shocking story might be untrue. But gradually the details had

shaped themselves too accurately for unbelief to be prolonged. Yes, it must be true. If she had doubted yet, one glance at Violet's face was enough to carry conviction home to the heart of the bereaved mother. It was terrible, that face, in its haggard, despairing beauty, with its unearthly pallor, its dilated eyes, the lips slightly parted, the brow borne erect, as if reckless, now, of men's hate or earthly chastisement. No wonder, if at length the widow's pent-up anguish broke forth into that one cry of passionate woe, and that then she sank down, senseless, happily for her, on the floor.

Then came a time of hurrying feet and ringing of bells, and the sound of excited voices, and poor Mrs Philip Dashwood was huddled away, and laid on her bed, to recover, alas! only too soon, and to feel the old wound opened; the grief for her irreparable loss made into one of tenfold bitterness. That bright, fair boy, loved and loving! he to be the price, coldly paid, of a compact of marriage; and his destroyer, that seemingly noble girl, the dear, true-hearted, elder sister, to whose cruel hand he clung so trustingly; good, beautiful Violet! When the widow regained her powers of thought, the while that Beatrice Fleming watched beside her couch, it seemed as though her burning forehead could scarcely bear the throbbing of the overtasked brain. Violet, a murderess! Violet, the proud, pure, stately maiden, on whom all Montreal had looked as on something fairer; nobler, more gracious, than the crowd of pretty damsels that frequented the ball-room and the skating-rink. She had been poor, and Mrs Dashwood had been foremost in striving that she should be kept from the ills of poverty, from its enforced self-denial, its narrow cares, its carking anxiety, the gloom that it often casts over the outset of a joyous young life. And how had the frozen snake rewarded the kind hand that tended it! It was all the more sad and strange that Violet Maybrook's name had been not undeservedly coupled with praise for good deeds done. She had nursed the sick, when some fell malady made hiring attendants flinch from the contagion to be dreaded. She had saved lives, and notoriously, on two occasions, that of her enemy and accuser, Aphy Larpent, such saving being more common in the wild, free, colonial mode of living, where nature is yet but half-tamed, and virgin forest, and lake, and mighty river woo the adventurous, than on our side of the Atlantic. No one had ever known her to tell a falsehood, or to be treacherous, false, or cruel. Children came clustering round her with their loyal love, and it is said that those whom the young and stainless trust and admire, must be worthy of the admiration and the faith.

Yet it never came, for one instant, into Mrs Dashwood's head to doubt that the fearful truth had been spoken. She had seen it written on Violet's marble cheek, in her haggard eyes, in her blanched lips. True, too true! Her very silence was eloquent. The manner in which she had endured the accusation was of itself equivalent to a confession. She had not wept, or crouched, or owned her guilt. All the common signs of penitence or panic had been absent. But neither had she been able to brazen out the matter as vulgar criminals do. Speech had failed her from the first. Not naturally a dissembler, she had ill-played her part when taxed with the enormous wickedness, the horrid crime, for which her life was justly forfeit. But the boy! the boy! That he, of all children, should

have been thus cut off! It was as though he had died again, as though the little grave were but freshly dug, the flowers lying unwithered on the tiny coffin, the old gnawing pain, still new and bitter at the mother's heart. Foully done to death, and by whose contrivance! Slain, and by whose un pitying hand! She remembered—it was a renewed pang to the lonely widow to remember it—that she had encouraged the boy to call his governess by the fond name of sister; that his high spirit and hers had seemed to be in some sense akin; that Charley had been sometimes wayward and rebellious with his mother, but with Violet never; that the girl had once sat all night long beside his little bed in sickness, patiently holding the clinging, feverish fingers in hers as he slept, and she kept vigil, uncomplaining; that in convalescence the boy would accept food from no hand but that of 'Sister Vi,' and that she had murdered him. It was like the shadowy, shapeless horror of an evil dream.

Meanwhile, the sound of another approaching carriage, coming fast on through the twilight, had been succeeded by that of steps on the smooth gravel of the garden-path, and Oswald Charlton, accompanied by Sergeant Flint, had entered the house. The Dingle, usually the abode of peaceful order, was by this time in a state of complete confusion. The mistress of the house lay ill in her darkened chamber up-stairs. There had been an interchange of messages between the quiet cottage and the police station nearer to the sea-beach, ending in the arrival of two constables, one of whom patrolled the garden without, while the other had entered, and with him a hard-featured woman, with bony fingers that were well experienced in searching among the garments of what newspapers technically describe as female prisoners. Into this dismal category had Violet Maybrook now passed. From the moment when Mrs Dashwood had fallen swooning to the ground, and had so been borne from the room, a change had appeared to come over the accused. Her pride and her self-possession seemed to return to her, and as she drew herself up to her full height, and looked down upon the puny form of her denouncer, somewhat of her old haughty loveliness came back, like a mellow gleam of sunshine at the end of a dying day.

'The story has been artfully prepared,' she said boldly, 'and well rehearsed, I have no doubt. It is not here that its truth is to be tested, or that I am to be judged. A more impartial audience will decide, hereafter, between my version of the deplorable accident, and that which you have just so greedily drunk in. With the person before me, I will not argue, or bandy words, nor will I, unless under compulsion, remain in her presence. For the rest, you will find me: an obedient prisoner; and I intend, Superintendent Starkey, to take your well-meant advice, and, in your own words, to reserve my defence.'

Then, without deigning to notice Aphrodite Larpeut, she allowed herself to be led away, and conducted, under custody, to another room.

'As regards you, Miss Larpent,' said the superintendent, on returning to where Aphy was still standing, 'you had better sit down and make yourself as comfortable as you can, for a bit, until I receive instructions, for which I have just telegraphed. After what has occurred—'

'Do you mean that I, too, am a prisoner?' asked Aphy Larpent savagely. 'Even if I were the jade that you so politely called me, surely you dare not detain me here against my desire.'

'I dare not, miss,' returned the man seriously, 'take it on my own responsibility after what has come out'—

'About the will, do you mean?' interrupted Aphy.

'About the will, which is safe *now*,' replied the detective, tapping with his strong fingers the place where it lay tightly buttoned in beneath his dark-blue surcoat; 'with respect to the concealment of which—if no guilty knowledge—some explanation is necessary. Now, must I call in the constable you see from the window, to remain here during my absence, or may I rely on your being tractable?'

'Tractable!' Yes, Aphrodite would be tractable. It must be understood, and clearly, that she must be exonerated from any criminal charge, or at least from its consequences, before she would consent to give her testimony in open court; but so far as present submission went, she was ready to comply, only hoping that Mr Starkey would have the grace not to test her patience too severely. So saying, she sat herself down, sullenly enough, in a corner, and, taking up a book from the table near her, read, or feigned to read. Superintendent Starkey highly commended his troublesome witness for her very sensible resolve; but, nevertheless, when he left the room, he thoughtfully took the precaution of turning the key in the lock. And, an hour or so afterwards, Oswald Charlton, in company with Sergeant Flint, arrived at the Dingle.

It was nearly dark when the doctor who had been in attendance on Mrs Dashwood came downstairs, to report, before leaving the house, that the widow had fully regained consciousness, and that the first outburst of her renewed sorrow had spent itself without, so he hoped, any permanent injury to her health or reason. He readily consented to be the bearer of a message from Oswald, entreating Beatrice to see him for a moment; and soon those two, so drawn to one another by sympathy and love, so strangely separated by circumstances, met to hold a brief colloquy outside of Mrs Dashwood's chamber door. Beatrice Fleming looked pale and agitated, and the traces of recent tears were glistening on her young cheek, but it was happiness to her to feel the pressure of Oswald's hand, and to hear his voice once more.

'We must speak low,' she whispered; 'for this poor lady is awake now, though all but speechless with sorrow. You have heard the dreadful history! Oh, it was horrible; and to think that this unhappy girl was an inmate of the dear old house at Richmond, and constantly in our company! It seems like a horrid dream, too frightful to be true. Had she but denied it'—

'She could not, I fear,' answered Oswald sadly. 'Truth has a power of its own, even when it speaks by such vile lips as those of the accuser in this case. That Miss Larpent's motives were base and selfish throughout, none could doubt. But I am afraid that the hideous narrative is substantially true, however we might wish it to be proved false. I have not seen Miss Maybrook, who is shortly to be removed to safe keeping in London; but I have had a short interview with the other, who was, I have no doubt, the person who purloined the will from Lady Livingston's room,

immediately after her death. And then, wonder of wonders! I find the will here—the very paper that I have hunted for, almost without rest, since I undertook to trace it out. Mr Glegg has been communicated with, and I shall not be econtent until it is in his hands. You are rich now, Beatrice.'

'I had not thought of it,' rejoined Beatrice, with a gentle smile. 'I was never, as you know, very covetous of money, and these terrible events have made me quite forgetful of my own interests. It was the lawyer's clerk, I thought, who was suspected.'

'Wrongfully, as it seemed,' said Oswald, 'although he was clearly an accomplice of his sister's, and was implicated in the affair of the garroting of that unfortunate attorney. But he is dead, poor fellow; shot like a dog, before my eyes, in Paris. You need not start or grow pale, Beatrice, for the sergeant and I are safe back now from the shambles that evil strife has made of the fair French capital, and our task was not quite fruitless. Yes, he died, and not impenitently; and I think the tidings of his death, which she learned for the first time from Sergeant Flint, my trusty comrade in the adventure, have affected his wretched sister more powerfully than I could have conceived possible with such a nature as hers. It will be but a sad journey, that one to London, which remains to be taken by the night mail-train, for it is painful, even to the captors, to see two young lives like those of Violet Maybrook and Aphrodite Larpout end in disgrace and punishment, however merited. But my own quest is still but half-performed until I shall have met with Mr Glegg, and arranged for the reading of the will.'

ODDS AND ENDS:

FROM DR ROBERT CHAMBERS'S SCRAP-BOOK.

SCOTT AND SOME OF HIS FRIENDS.—My acquaintanceship with Sir Walter Scott began in 1821, and ended shortly before his death, eleven years afterwards. Our intercourse took place chiefly in rambling walks together through the Old Town of Edinburgh, in which he, in his kind way, pointed out houses that had at one time been occupied by persons of note. One day, in 1825, we took a walk towards the College buildings, my wish being that he should point out the spot where he was born, which was in that locality. In going along the narrow thoroughfare called North College Street, we paused at a point opposite the head of the College Wynd. This wynd, or lane, bordered by tall dingy houses, now occupied by a humble class of families, formed at one time the chief access from the town to the college, and was inhabited by persons of no small note. It also contained some lodging-houses, where dwelt youths attending the university. There is a vague tradition that Goldsmith, when a student, lived in the College Wynd. [It is also said that the infamous revolutionist, Marat, dwelt in the same locality.] The houses in the wynd, on both sides, came close up to the gateway of the college. The house on the east side of the gateway was that in which dwelt Sir Walter Scott's father. It was in the third floor of this house, accessible by an entry leading to a common

stair behind, that Sir Walter first saw the light, August 15, 1771. It was a house, as I was told, of plain appearance; its chief disadvantage being in the unhealthiness of the situation, to which Sir Walter attributed the deaths of several brothers and sisters before him. When the house was required for the opening of North College Street, the elder Scott received a fair price for his portion of it. He had previously removed to an airier mansion, No. 25 George Square, where Sir Walter spent his boyhood and youth. The site of the old house in which he was born was pointed out to me by Sir Walter. We stood on the spot—part of the open street. On his mentioning that his father had got a good price for his share of the house, in order that it might be removed, I took the liberty of jocularly expressing my belief that more money might have been made of it, and the public much more gratified, if it had remained to be shewn as the birthplace of a man who had written so many popular books. 'Ay, ay,' said Sir Walter, 'that is all very well; but I am afraid I should have required to be dead first, and that would not have been so comfortable, you know.' [Under the operations of a city Improvement Act, North College Street has been merged in the broad thoroughfare called Chambers Street, and the whole of the College Wynd has been swept away. The spot where Scott was born is, however, easily identified.]

Next to the pleasure of being acquainted with Sir Walter Scott, has been that of knowing intimately some of his friends, such as the Ettrick Shephard, Willie Laidlaw, Sir Adam Ferguson, and others. All of them have now disappeared. Sir Adam Ferguson, as an Edinburgh man, and well known in the street with his dog Peter, a fussy little animal, was my latest of these friends; his gossip about Scott, and Abbotsford, and old times, being interminable. I looked on him as a link between the eighteenth and nineteenth century—not a dry, hard link, but full of life and glee, and stored with no end of anecdotes. He remembered sitting as a child on the knee of David Hume, and receiving presents of sweetmeats from him. He spoke in lively terms of the amiable good-natured look of the philosopher, and thought it had not been done justice to in any of his portraits. [Hume died in 1776.] In the course of a ride with Sir Adam, he one day pointed out Brunstain House to me with the remark that his father had acted as secretary, there, to Lord-justice-clerk Milton, in 1742.

As is known from Lockhart's memoirs, Sir Adam was the intimate friend of Sir Walter Scott from boyhood to the end of his days. As a nephew of Dr Black, the celebrated chemist, Sir Adam, of course, knew him well; also Hutton and Adam Smith. His father, Professor Ferguson, author of the *History of the Roman Republic*, being a member of the distinguished cluster of literary and philanthropical men who conferred distinction on Edinburgh in the latter half of the last century, Sir Adam knew all of them more or less. He was the

means of Scott, while a boy, seeing Burns, for he took him to his father's house on the night when the inspired ploughman was there in 1787. Retired from active life in his old days, when he was knighted, Sir Adam told innumerable stories about his career in the army, his being taken prisoner by the French, and the permission given to him to visit Paris, where he accidentally saw Napoleon in a public ceremonial. His funniest reminiscences, as it appeared to me, were of Peeblesshire, where he lived some time with his father. He had caught up the peculiar intonation of the natives, and his specimens of the way they spoke, with a queer elevation of the voice at the end of every sentence, were inimitable.

One of his anecdotes has been given in my brother's *History of Peeblesshire*: The professor, his father, in relinquishing burdensome duties, had taken up a temporary residence at Neidpath Castle, an old baronial mansion on the Tweed, within a mile of Peebles. Here he received the visits of all people of note in the neighbourhood, to whom he shewed a genial hospitality. At this time there lived in Peebles a Mr Robert Smith, butcher, a smart little man, who, when in full dress, wore hair-powder, and had otherwise so gentlemanly an appearance, that he would have passed for a person of distinction, if he could only have held his tongue. Rob was a pushing fellow professionally, and did not want confidence. One day, at Neidpath Castle, 'Mr Smith from Peebles' was announced, and being shewn in, was received with the usual urbanity of the professor, who imagined him to be a man of some importance in the neighbourhood, to whom it was proper to pay some attention. Rob had, of course, called to see about getting a customer, to recommend his veal, and so forth; but unfortunately there was no time to talk of business, for the members of the family were about to sit down to dinner, of which Mr Smith was hospitably invited to partake. No way abashed, Rob took his place at table with the rest of the company. There appeared, however, to be something wrong with him. He did not do justice to the dinner. 'I am sorry, Mr Smith, to see you don't eat,' said the venerable host with polite solicitude. 'Well, to tell you the truth, professor,' replied Rob, 'I have never any appetite on killing days!' Looks all round to be imagined.

Sir Adam was one of the few confidants of Scott regarding the authorship of the Waverley novels. He, indeed, was often at Abbotsford while Sir Walter was busy with them, and tells how he sat beside him when writing *The Antiquary*, sheet after sheet of which was handed to him on completion. Sir Adam described a shooting ramble he had one day in the high grounds near Gala-shiels with Sir Walter. It was an exceedingly windy day, and Scott had like to be blown from his pony. Coming to a lonely farm-house in a very exposed situation, they went up to it, but could not get admission. At length, a female voice was heard within, and Ferguson called out:

'What's come of a' the men?' 'Ou, they are a' awa' o'er to Windydoors' [a real place so named]. 'I think they might have been content wi' their ain doors,' said Scott in his dry droll way, as he turned his pony's head.

Calling one day at Ferguson's residence at Huntly Burn, and observing a fine honeysuckle in blossom [*Scoticè*, flourishing] over the door, Sir Walter congratulated Miss Ferguson on its appearance. She spoke of it as *trumpet honeysuckle*. 'Weel,' said Scott, 'ye'll never come out o' your ain door without a flourish of trumpets!'

Sir Adam survived his old friend Scott twenty-two years. In his latter days, while able to go about, he was often at my own and my brother's house. With all the members of my family he was intimate; the singing of Burns's lyrics by the girls giving him uncommon pleasure. On the last occasion he visited us, Mrs C. entertained him with some sacred tunes on the harmonium. As he sat listening with head bent down, eyes shut, and arms crossed, as if in a state of entrancement, my daughter, Mary, executed a sketch of him in crayons, which remains a memorial of this interesting old man. He died in about five weeks afterwards, November 18, 1854.

Conversing lately with Mr James Hay Forbes, son of the late Lord Medwyn, he mentioned that he recollected Sir Walter Scott being at his father's house at dinner, when the conversation turned on the manner in which Sir Walter had represented the religious troubles of Scotland in the tale of *Old Mortality*. Mr Forbes remembers that, when the attack on Scott, in defence of the Covenanters, was mentioned, Sir Walter used this expression: 'I underdid the Covenanters, and it cost me no small trouble.'—Who now does not feel that Scott treated the subject with delicacy and historical truth?

[To the above notes on Scott and some of his friends, written by my brother in 1858, I may make the following addition:

For a number of years after the decease of Sir Walter, there were many small floating anecdotes and memorabilia of his habits, and the happy way in which he would make some pleasantry out of very ordinary occurrences. Two or three instances occur to recollection.—One day, when walking along Princes Street, Edinburgh, my brother, who accompanied him, made the remark that he was evidently well known, for many persons looked back at him on passing. 'Oh, ay, ay,' replied Scott jocosely; 'more know Tom Fool than Tom Fool knows!'—The late Mr Thomas Tegg, publisher, Cheapside, having, on the occasion of visiting Scotland, ventured with a friend to call on Sir Walter at Abbotsford, was somewhat doubtful of his reception, for he had published a small book in doggerel verse, designed to bring Scott's muse into ridicule. He was speedily relieved of his apprehensions. 'I am sorry to say,' said Tegg apologetically, 'that I happen to be the publisher of *Jokesby, a Burlesque on Rokeby*.' 'Glad to see you, Mr Tegg,' replied Sir Walter; 'the more jokes the better!'—Mrs John Ballantyne, in her reminiscences of Scott, states that, besides his story-telling manner, he had another quite distinct, in which he was accustomed to utter any snatch of poetry,

such as a verse of a Border ballad, or a simple but touching popular rhyme. 'I can never forget,' she says, 'the awe-striking solemnity with which he pronounced an elegiac stanza inscribed on a tombstone in Melrose Abbey:

Earth walketh on the earth
Glistering like gold;
Earth goeth to the earth
Sooner than it wold.
Earth buildeth on the earth
Palaces and towers;
Earth sayeth to the earth,
All shall be ours.'

—On the occasion of an excursion with a friend to Dumfriesshire and Galloway, Scott's money happened to run out; and he borrowed from his companion a pound-note at Tinwald Manse, and two pounds at the inn of Beattock Bridge. The payment of the loan became the subject of a bit of pleasantry. Returning home, he enclosed three pounds to his friend, with the following lines:

One at Tinwald Manse, and two at Beattock Brig,
That makes three, if Cocker's worth a fig;
Borrow while you may, pay when you can,
And at the last you'll die an honest man!

w. c.]

HIBERNAL IMPATIENCE.

O LAGGARD year, that lasts so long,
When will thy leaden pinions rise,
And thou break into heaving skies,
And be a disimprisoned song?

O burst into the heaving Spring!
And roll away these cold dark days;
Inspire Æolian notes of praise,
That long to thaw a frozen wing.

Thou too art part of Nature's truth,
And in thy mystery thou art good;
Yet, roll from over field and flood,
And bring us Spring's eternal youth.

I long for April's sweet subline,
When Earth recalls the bowers of Eve,
And angels in the night shall weave
The daintiest filigree of time.

When all the world shall answer God,
In living greenness to the eye,
Beneath an interflashing sky,
And o'er a daisy-quickened sod.

When fragrant comes creation's breath,
And nature is a choral mute;
Life wakes—and pulses flash and shoot—
In Resurrection out of Death.

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MARY SOMERVILLE.

LITTLE more than a year ago, the world lost Mrs Somerville, one of the most remarkable women of the present or past age—a being not less noted for her profound learning, than for a noble simplicity of character along with a desire to fulfil the domestic duties becoming to her sex and station. She was by birth a Scotchwoman, but a large portion of her long life was spent amidst the literary and scientific circles of England and the continent. We should have known little regarding her history unless for her own diligence in from time to time writing down reminiscences of her early life and advanced age, which memoranda have been collected and edited by her daughter, Martha; the work forming an agreeable piece of autobiography, which we doubt not will be duly appreciated within many a family circle.* All we can say of Mrs Somerville must consist of a mere sketch, to give an idea of a person so extraordinary.

Mary Fairfax, that being her maiden name, was a daughter of Captain (afterwards Admiral Sir William) Fairfax of the royal navy, a relation by descent of Lord Fairfax, commander of the Parliamentary forces in England. A sister of Captain Fairfax's wife was married to the Rev. Dr Somerville of Jedburgh, in whose manse Mary was born 26th December 1780; a somewhat strange circumstance, for she afterwards was married to his son, her cousin. In the long absences of her husband on duty, Mrs Fairfax was constrained to live in a rigidly economical style, in a small house overlooking the sea at Burntisland, a town on the north shore of the Firth of Forth, opposite Edinburgh. Here Mary and her brothers Samuel and Henry were reared, according to the plain and severe notions of the period. The solace of the little girl seems to have consisted in rambling along the seashore picking up shells, or in strolls on the open grassy downs or links in quest of wild-flowers. Her education was of a rudimentary, though not at

all unusual kind, for except reading and writing, and scarcely that, girls in most parts of Scotland went through a miserable course of school instruction, even as lately as the end of last century.

'My mother,' says Mary, 'taught me to read the Bible, and to say my prayers morning and evening; otherwise, she allowed me to grow up a wild creature. When I was seven or eight years old, I began to be useful, for I pulled the fruit for preserving, shelled the peas and beans, fed the poultry, and looked after the dairy, for we kept a cow. I never cared for dolls, and had no one to play with me. I amused myself in the garden, which was much frequented by birds. My mother sent me in due time to learn the Catechism of the Kirk, and attend the public examinations. This was a severe trial for me; for, besides being timid and shy, I had a bad memory, and did not understand one word of the Catechism. When I was between eight and nine years old, my father came home from sea, and was shocked to find me a savage. This dissatisfaction with the state of affairs led to Mary being sent to a boarding-school for young ladies at Musselburgh, where, though perfectly straight and well made, she was inclosed in stiff stays with a steel busk in front, while a band drew back her shoulder-blades till they almost met. The only sort of instruction was learning to write in a rude way, and to acquire the rudiments of the English and French grammars. Many tears were shed in the dreary establishment, and Mary returned home little the better for her schooling. Again at Burntisland, she was solaced with her sea-side rambles, and the study of natural objects—the shells on the shore, the flowers, the birds, the sky and its starry host affording inexpressible delight.

The father does not seem to have been very brilliant, though a brave and jolly enough seaman, who gallantly fought with Duncan at Camperdown in 1797. He disapproved of Mary spending time in reading, and insisted on her learning to sew, as he called it; and accordingly she was put to a sewing-school, and she became a proficient needlewoman in various branches; so that the old salt was not in the main far wrong; only as she

* *Personal Recollections of Mary Somerville.* 1 vol. Murray, London. 1873.

says: 'I was annoyed that my turn for reading was so much disapproved of, and thought it unjust that women should have been given a desire for knowledge if it were wrong to acquire it.'

Restrained in her desire for knowledge, there happened to be a pair of small globes in the house, of which her mother graciously allowed her to learn the use from the village schoolmaster. He also taught Latin and navigation to boys, but these were out of the question for girls, of whom 'very few were learned writing.' Brother Sam was meanwhile getting his education in Edinburgh; and thither Mary, when thirteen years of age, proceeded with her mother for the winter—a great event, for it spoke of music lessons, and visits to places of interest in the old Scottish capital, the society in which was in a state of perturbation on account of the terrible convulsions in France. What was learned in Edinburgh bore good fruit. 'On returning to Burntisland,' says Mary Fairfax, 'I spent four or five hours daily at the piano; and for the sake of having something to do, I taught myself Latin enough, from such books as we had, to read *Cæsar's Commentaries*, a work which few boys even at first-class schools can master under two or three years' training. Here we have the first glimpse of this extraordinary woman's aptitude for learning. She again went to Edinburgh, to get lessons in dancing—the dances taught being reels and country-dances, with the *minuet de la cour*, in which the great art consisted in learning how to courtesy and hold out the frock properly. At times about this period there were visits to uncles, and on one of these occasions she acquired a knowledge of arithmetic.

At Burntisland she saw a magazine in which there were some questions in algebra, a thing she had never heard of before, and she resolved, if possible, to learn what it was. The family library was ransacked for the purpose. 'In *Robertson's Navigation*,' she tells us, 'I flattered myself that I had got what I wanted; but I soon found I was mistaken. I perceived, however, that astronomy did not consist in star-gazing; and as I persevered in studying the book for a time, I certainly got a dim view of several subjects which were useful to me afterwards. Unfortunately, not one of our acquaintances or relations knew anything of science or natural history; nor, had they done so, should I have had the courage to ask any of them a question; for I should have been laughed at. I was often very sad and forlorn, not a hand to help me.' What a revelation of a young mind groping about for knowledge, and denied all sympathy, even from the parents, who were unaware of the intellectual qualities of their gifted daughter!

Meanwhile, denied the means of learning algebra and mathematics, Mary Fairfax, still a girl of about fifteen, took to studying Greek, and without instruction learned enough to read Xenophon and part of Herodotus. A fresh visit to Edinburgh with her mother opened a pleasant vista of educational pro-

gress. She was allowed to attend an academy for drawing presided over by Nasmyth, the eminent landscape painter. Besides being a good artist, Nasmyth was a well-informed man, with superior conversational powers. One day, in speaking about perspective, he told some of his lady pupils that they should 'study Euclid's *Elements of Geometry*; the foundation not only of perspective, but of astronomy and all mechanical science.' Here, in an unexpected manner, she got the information she wanted. Yet, she durst not ask for the book. It was only on returning to Burntisland, that from the tutor of her youngest brother, Henry, she was able to procure Euclid and Bonycastle's *Algebra*, and she went with courage and assiduity into the study of these works. Do not, however, let it be supposed that in plunging into a course of mathematics she neglected ordinary duties. Her studies occupied only spare hours, such as are usually spent in idle vacuity. The information given as to how she employed her time is worth quoting: 'I had to take part in the household affairs, and to make and mend my own clothes. I rose early, played on the piano, and painted during the time I could spare in the daylight hours, but I sat up very late reading Euclid. The servants, however, told my mother: "It was no wonder the stock of candles was soon exhausted, for Miss Mary sat up reading till a very late hour;" whereupon an order was issued to stop this irregularity. Deprived of candles, she was thrown on her memory of Euclid, and lay in bed repeating his geometrical demonstrations. So things went on till another season was spent in Edinburgh, where, under the care of Lady Buchan, she made her first appearance at a ball, and had for partner Mr Gilbert Elliot, afterwards Earl of Minto. At this time, when budding into womanhood, Miss Fairfax had a graceful figure, below the middle size, a beautiful complexion, and bright intelligent eyes. Her ball dresses consisted simply of India muslin with a little Flanders lace. During each day she continued her painting studies, and practised not less than five hours at the piano. She presents some amusing recollections of Edinburgh society at the period.

Back again after these winter gaieties she returned as usual to Burntisland, studied, read romances, and revelled in Ossian; poetry being always her delight after any hard brain-work. Thus time sped away till 1804, when a revolution took place in her affairs. At the request of the Empress Catharine II., a British officer, Admiral Greig, had been sent to organise the Russian navy. His son, Mr Samuel Greig, came to the Firth of Forth on board a Russian ship, and was received by the Fairfaxes with more than ordinary hospitality, for he stood in the relation of cousin to Mary and her brothers. Greig had received the appointment of Russian consul for Britain, and was about to settle in England. What more natural than that he should fall in love with his pretty and accomplished cousin, Miss Fairfax? He had alighted on his fate. He was wedded to Mary, who, with but a

moderate trousseau, accompanied him to the scene of his official duties.

It has usually been stated that Mrs Somerville acquired her knowledge and taste for mathematics from her first husband, Mr Greig, which is obviously a mistake. She was an enthusiastic student of mathematics before she entered married life. Nor was her first husband long spared to her. After the brief space of three years, she returned to Burntisland a widow with two little boys. The younger of them died in childhood; the other, Woronzow Greig, barrister-at-law, survived till our own times. As a widow, with the care of her children, and in a sense independent of the narrow notions of her parents, Mrs Greig resolved to pursue a regular course of mathematics, even to the highest branches of the science. This course of study was steadily carried out under the counsels of Professor Wallace of the university of Edinburgh. She bought quite a library of English and French treatises, the very titles of some of which would almost frighten a modern fine lady: *Differential and Integral Calculus*, Lagrange's *Theory of Analytical Functions*, Callet's *Logarithms*, La Place's *Mécanique Céleste*, and his *Analytical Theory of Probabilities*. Pleasant studies these for a young and good-looking widow! Her friends, of course, thought her very foolish. They expected that with her independent means she would have entertained them with costly gaieties. She laughed at, and cared nothing for their criticism; continued to attend to her domestic duties, and recreated herself with the sublimities of La Place.

The widowhood was of no long duration. In 1812, when she was thirty-two years of age, she again entered matrimony. Her second husband was her cousin, William Somerville, eldest son of Rev. Dr Somerville of Jedburgh, in whose house she had been born. Somerville had been much abroad as a surgeon in the army, and possessed that degree of general knowledge which enabled him to appreciate the amiability and intelligence of his wife. The two spent some time at Jedburgh and its neighbourhood, becoming acquainted with Sir Walter Scott and his friends. Being in 1816 appointed a member of the Army Medical Board, Dr Somerville removed to London, and there he and his wife took up their residence in Hanover Square. To Mrs Somerville the change was immense and gratifying. While never allowing herself to be withdrawn from what was due to her family and household, she enjoyed the acquaintance of noted men of science, the Herschels, Dr Wollaston, Dr Buckland, Mr Babbage, Sir Edward Parry, Captain Sabine, and so on; she also formed an intimacy with a cloud of literary, dramatic, and political celebrities. Her society was courted, for already she had become known for her scientific papers. At no time, however, did she presume on the extent of her acquirements. Modest and retiring, she did not affect the part of a learned woman, neither did she offensively assume the mas-

culine character, but, on the contrary, kept strictly within what is reckoned to be graceful in feminine manners.

She tells us that she frequently went to see Babbage, a man of transcendent intellect and a mathematician of the highest order. Looking at the machines which he had contrived to perform deep mathematical calculations, she breaks out in a pious fervour, that nothing had afforded her so profound an idea of the Deity, 'as these purely mental conceptions of numerical and mathematical science, which have been by slow degrees vouchsafed to man, and are still granted in these latter times by the Differential Calculus, now superseded by the Higher Algebra, all of which must have existed in that sublimely omniscient Mind from eternity.' No finer expression could be uttered. Without an adequate knowledge of the natural laws, and the grandly adjusted forces which preserve the balance of the universe, as represented by the higher mathematics, any conception of the Divine power and intelligence will be necessarily imperfect.

The cheerful and happy life of the Somervilles in Hanover Square terminated sadly. They lost their eldest girl, and about the same time they lost their fortune, through the dishonesty of a person they had trusted. They now went to a house at Chelsea; Dr Somerville, while still retaining his place at the Army Medical Board, being appointed physician to the Chelsea Hospital. Here they resided for some years, Mrs Somerville keeping up her scientific and literary connection. Known for her marvellous mathematical knowledge, Lord Brougham, in 1827, asked her to write a summary of the *Mécanique Céleste* of La Place for the Society for Diffusing Useful Knowledge. Diffident as to her ability for the work, with her time much broken in upon by ladies calling 'to spend a few hours,' she reluctantly undertook the task, and it was a heavy one. However, by dint of immense study and perseverance, she got through it satisfactorily. The work exceeded its dimensions as at first contemplated, and was published in an independent form in 1831, under the title of *Mechanism of the Heavens*, with a dedication to Lord Brougham. This work at once achieved for its authoress a high place among the cultivators of physical science. The *Mechanism of the Heavens* commanded the hearty and kindly expressed approbation of Sir John Herschel, and Professor Whewell wrote a sonnet in its praise. It became a class-book at Cambridge. That Mrs Somerville should have found time, in the midst of ordinary duties, to write a work requiring such depth of thought, is remarkable. One thing that helped her was a power of laying down and taking up a subject at pleasure; she was also indebted to a singular capacity for abstracting the mind from what was going on before her eyes. She could hear a great deal of silly talk, or some ridiculous harangue, and be thinking all the time about mathematical problems.

The success of the book brought honours on its authoress. She was elected an honorary member of the Royal Astronomical Society at the same time as Miss Caroline Herschel (another woman of

extraordinary genius). Afterwards she was elected an honorary member of various learned societies at home and abroad. Her bust in marble by Chantrey was placed in the hall of the Royal Society. These honours caused a number of old friends to change their tune. Relations and others who had so severely criticised and ridiculed her, were now loud in her praise. The warmth with which Dr Somerville entered into her success deeply affected her.

Mrs Somerville had now won a European reputation. On visiting Paris for change of scene, she was waited on by Arago, Biot, Gay-Lussac, and other illustrious French savants. While in Paris, her mother died, aged ninety; her father having died previously. Notwithstanding a rather poor state of health, Mrs Somerville, when residing in Paris, wrote her celebrated work, *The Connection of the Physical Sciences*, and saw it through the press, the proof-sheets being sent through the English embassy. We learn that much of this great work was written in bed. The book appeared in 1834. A highly flattering notice of it was given in the *Quarterly Review*, the writer comparing its authoress to Hypatia and Madame Agnesi. This, which is the best known work of Mrs Somerville, has passed through a number of editions.

We have not space to go into an account of her miscellaneous scientific explorations; and can only say that one of the more noted of these labours consisted in experiments on the magnetic influence of the violet rays of the solar spectrum—a subject which still invites the consideration of men of science. In 1835, during Sir Robert Peel's ministry, government granted her a pension of £200 a year, to enable her to pursue her scientific labours with less anxiety. Her next work was a treatise on *Physical Geography*, which was published in 1848. Several editions of it have since appeared, besides an Italian translation. When in Florence in 1860, Mrs Somerville lost her husband, and was a second time a widow. After this, she lived chiefly in Italy. Though now at a very advanced age, she retained her liveliness, took delight in reading, and in keeping herself acquainted with public affairs, as well as with the progress of scientific discovery. In 1869, appeared her last production, a treatise *On Molecular and Microscopic Science*.

How she otherwise occupied herself in her old age is thus described: 'I have resumed my habit of working, and can count the threads of a fine canvas without spectacles. I receive every one who comes to see me, and often have the pleasure of old friends very unexpectedly. In the evening, I read a novel, but my tragic days are over; I prefer a cheerful conversational novel to the sentimental ones. I have recently been reading Walter Scott's novels again, and enjoyed the broad Scotch in them. I play a few games at *béniqne* with one of my daughters, for honour and glory, and so our evenings pass pleasantly enough.'

To the last, Mrs Somerville was fond of birds, and she and her daughters had several as pets. The villa they occupied was situated at a beautiful part on the Bay of Naples, within sight of Vesuvius. Here this admirable woman closed her earthly career. The following were her concluding memoranda: 'The Blue-Peter has been long flying at my fore-mast, and now that I am in my ninety-second year, I must soon expect the signal for sailing. It

is a solemn voyage, but it does not disturb my tranquillity. Deeply sensible of my utter unworthiness, and profoundly grateful for innumerable blessings I have received, I trust in the infinite mercy of my Almighty Creator. I have every reason to be thankful that my intellect is still unimpaired; and although my strength is weakness, my daughters support my tottering steps, and by incessant care and help, make the infirmities of age so light to me that I am perfectly happy.'

Mrs Somerville, says her daughter Martha, 'passed away so gently, that those around her scarcely perceived when she had left them. It was a beautiful and painless close of a noble and a happy life.' She died in sleep on the morning of the 29th November 1872.

The moral that may be drawn from the life of Mrs Somerville, of which we have offered but an imperfect sketch, is exceedingly obvious. Considering how meagre was her education, what chilling difficulties she had to encounter in her persevering efforts at self-culture while never neglecting ordinary duties, and looking to the literary and scientific eminence which she attained, we are entitled to point out to almost the humblest of her sex, that where there is a resolute determination to improve the intellectual and moral faculties, all obstacles have a fair chance of being successfully overcome. It is usually the *will*, more than opportunity or natural capacity, that is deficient.

W. C.

VIGILANCE COMMITTEES.

THE late revelations regarding the weakness of the law and failure of justice in the United States, give a painful idea of the imperfect moral and political condition of that country. In the vast western domains, where population is sparse, and society has scarcely got into legal shape, Lynch law, as it is called, forms a kind of recognised institution, and simply signifies that, in the absence of legal machinery, people may take the law into their own hand. Latterly—and the writer of this speaks from experience—there have sprung up regularly organised bodies of lynchers, under the designation of *Vigilantes*, or Vigilant Committees.

These committees, whose organisation resembles that of the *Vehmgericht* of Germany in the middle ages, are bound together by secret oaths, signs, and passes, any violation of which would incur the penalty of death. That such associations should exist in the present day appears very extraordinary, yet such is the case, the principle on which they are formed being self-defence. These bodies, though terrible in their aims, do not consist, as one would think, of vulgar desperadoes, but for the most part of quietly disposed persons; and their arrangements are usually carried on with a degree of calmness and impartiality; so that the peaceful residents in a new district are generally glad to find that the Vigilantes are among them; but it is very evident that a secret and irresponsible tribunal is open to shocking abuses. No one will require to be reminded of the persecutions which free negroes and white abolitionists used to suffer; the latter, indeed, in many states, being looked upon as criminals of a deeper dye than murderers, or even horse-thieves. It will be understood, therefore, that, through the influence of strong prejudices—or, it may be, strong drink—the organisations are

sometimes guilty of acts which no reasonable man could extenuate.

Obviously the very existence of Vigilance Committees has a generally demoralising tendency. The levity with which all classes, and even women, talk of stringing men up, is one of the most revolting features of western society; the anecdotes which you will hear coolly told, and as coolly listened to, would send a thrill of horror through an audience anywhere else. Yet it is a matter of course that this should be so, as 'use doth breed a habit in a man.' At the town of Cheyenne, a little to the north of Denver—not a very large place now, but, at the time of which I speak, only a railway town—the roughs and thieves were in extraordinary force, and no assistance, as usual, being derived or expected from the ordinary law-officers, a Vigilance Committee was formed, which went to work so energetically that, for a fortnight at a time, a man was found every morning hanging to a telegraph pole, the favourite gibbet in those parts; and on one occasion the four poles which carried the wire across the central square had *each* a dead man dangling, as a testimony to the work of the Vigilantes. At Sheridan, on the Kansas Pacific line, four men at one time have been hung on the tressel bridge hard by; while, on the Denver and Cheyenne road, seven men were all 'strung up' the same night, which was the most wholesale dealing I ever knew.

In the eye of the law—supposing the law in the United States to have any eyes—the hanging of a rough by the Vigilantes is as bad, I presume, as the hanging of a Vigilante by the roughs; but, in practice, the things are very different. If it were not for these committees, the peopling of the frontier would proceed very slowly—would have, indeed, sometimes to be suspended. The necessity for their existence cannot be fully appreciated by any one who is not acquainted with the utter distrust the bulk of the people in the United States have of their judges, juries, and courts, even in great cities, and in all ranks. But what better could be expected, when we know that judges are appointed by popular suffrage, and need to conciliate the mob whom, probably, they despise?

This distrust in judges and juries is one great cause of their proneness to form these irregular tribunals; and it must be owned that such a feeling is not without foundation. In November 1872, there were eighteen murderers in the Tombs prison at New York, the most recent murder among them being fully ten months old; while at least one—the brutal Forster, who murdered Mr Putnam, an inoffensive elderly gentleman, on a street car, in open day—had been there for eighteen months. Fourteen of these men had never been tried at all; four had been tried; but, as in the case of Stokes, who shot Fisk, and who was in the Tombs at the time I mention, as soon as tried, a motion for a new trial is invariably made, and as invariably granted. But, in the same month—November—a lawyer named King shot another named O'Neil, almost under the eyes of the judge, on leaving the chambers of the latter, near Wall Street, for no reason but that the murdered man had given evidence that King did not like. I was close by the spot, and the excitement was tremendous. There was a general desire to 'lynch King,' who was with difficulty rescued; and the loudly

expressed determination to take the law into their own hands in future, and the often echoed declaration, that 'hanging was played out in New York,' shewed the feeling of the well-dressed crowd, and the quarter to which they looked for a remedy of their grievance. It was commonly remarked that, after this display, there 'would be a little stringing-up among the Tombs lodgers;' and the prophecy was fulfilled.

Go where you will, the same feeling of distrust in the courts and judges is expressed. Whenever any murder of particular atrocity is committed, if the parties are in a respectable sphere, bets are offered that the criminal escapes scot-free, and sarcastic comments on the preliminary proceedings are freely made. In a certain town in the west, two men had a 'difficulty,' and one went up to the other in the open street, and, in the presence of several spectators, shot him dead. He was arrested; the day of his trial came on, and popular belief inclined to the idea that this man at any rate would be punished. His brother arrived in the town a day or two before the trial, and was said to have 'interviewed' the jury; the probability is that he did so, as, after hearing the evidence, which was as simple and point-blank as given above, they returned a verdict of 'Not guilty.' My readers will not be surprised to learn that in this very town they have now an active Vigilance Committee, who recently held a 'neck-tie festival;' that is, the night before I last came through the place, they broke open the jail, seized a man who was charged with burglary, and duly 'strung him up' to a telegraph pole. If any member of the committee had been asked why he did not, at any rate, wait for the action of the court, his reply would probably have shewn that he considered the burglar's escape from punishment entirely a question of dollars.

It must also be borne in mind that, on the frontier, to say the least, the officials who are appointed to administer the law, and whose titles read very well on paper, often do nothing at all to check the lawless and dangerous; sometimes they are utterly afraid of them, and sometimes are more likely to play into their hands than to attempt to repress them. Some things which could be related under this head are absolutely incredible to English readers; it by no means follows, however, that they are not true. In one instance, the sheriff of a county was urged to make some effort to capture certain robbers, who kept a whole district in fear. This sheriff had no properly organised force at his back, and no means of obtaining any, so extreme efficiency was hardly to be looked for; and he used to levy some men, and make an excursion into the mountains after these wretches—who were most atrocious characters, doubly and trebly dyed murderers—and he would always send them word when he was coming, and where he should pretend to search. When the pursuit was supposed to be hottest, the robbers have been known to call, repeatedly, at the sheriff's house, stable their horses, have their suppers, and rest the night there. This information was derived from men who saw the robbers at his house, from the man who was sent to warn them, and from the lips of the outlaws themselves. Indeed, were it not for fear of the Vigilantes, it would be nearly impossible to keep a number of the inhabitants of these frontier villages from siding with and abetting the roughs. The most dangerous confederacy I have known

anything about were sure of the sympathy of some influential residents, and whenever any project was on foot, or movement against them undertaken, it was said that the sheriff—not the official just alluded to—would send a man on his fastest horse up to their haunts, so that everything done to detect or cripple them was always discounted. But when once the Vigilantes are firmly established, such treachery would become too dangerous to be indulged in; for such accomplices would be chosen as the first victims.

The Vigilance Committees are now pretty well considered as a recognised institution; every attempt on the part of government to put them down having been a failure. So well are their functions understood, that, in practice, government officials deal with them as with ordinary tribunals. Two men murdered, in 1872, a sergeant of cavalry for the sake of his horse; they were captured, and proved to be well-known characters, who had committed many depredations in my own district. The military captured them, and they were in custody at Fort Union, about a hundred miles from Santa Fé, in New Mexico; but it was determined to hang them, as it was morally certain that if they were sent for trial they would escape. So a body of the residents about there 'organised' themselves, applied for the murderers; and the officers 'gave them up to the civil power,' as they described it. The civil power did what they were expected to do; they hung the wretches by the roadside 'right away,' and a feeling of thankfulness pervaded our border district when the transaction was known.

The recognition of Vigilance Committees was settled some twenty years or more ago, when a body of about four hundred and fifty soldiers were moved to San Francisco to put them down, and seize their leaders. The Vigilantes boasted that they could muster seventy thousand rifles in California, and a vast number of these resided in San Francisco, or were drawn thither by the reported movements. Of course the soldiers were marching into a trap; they were allowed to penetrate into the centre of the city, and there found themselves surrounded by an ambushed force which could annihilate them. The officer in command was only too glad to be allowed to withdraw in safety, upon the terms dictated by the Vigilantes.

From the very nature of these committees, they can rarely deal out any punishment but death; it is this—and the secret character of their proceedings—which renders it impossible for any man, however resolute, to stand a chance against them, or however wary, to avoid being taken at a disadvantage. It is this that gives them such irresistible power. The only clemency they can shew is to give the subject of their dislike notice to leave the country in a certain time, usually twenty-four hours. This notice is often given by a letter pushed under the door, or placed where it is sure to be seen, and although anonymous, it is but seldom disregarded. If the man be contumacious, and will not go, he generally gets his friends around him for a while, and is on his guard; but even then the day comes when he is riding alone, or is alone in his house: and his body swinging from the nearest tree, or telegraph pole, tells all who see it that the Vigilantes will be obeyed. Rigid strictness in this matter is observed; and if a man has once been warned to leave the country or town, and returns there, however peaceable he may be,

or however great a time may have elapsed, hanging is his inevitable doom. Denver can furnish as many examples of this deferred vengeance as any town in the United States, and the wooden bridge at the western side of the town was a very favourite place of execution in such cases. This would be carried out sometimes at mid-day, no one ever dreaming of interfering; the man had been warned, had had the hardihood to return, and therefore any secrecy could be dispensed with. No 'lynching' has taken place in Denver for several years; but so highly is the practice held in respect, that there is no doubt but that, should crime and violence get very much ahead, an immense Vigilance Committee would at once be formed.

In conclusion, it may be noticed that all over the United States there seems to be a great propensity to form secret clubs; as in addition to the Vigilantes, they have at the same time the K. K. K. or Ku-Klux-Klan; the meaning or origin of which name no one knows, excepting that Klan is meant for 'Clan.' This is a dreadful, I may say a savage organisation, to repress the influence and check the elevation of the negro race, and the papers teem with records of murder, arson, and violence committed by these gangs—that is, such papers as dare notice their proceedings at all. Then, before the war, they had the Know-nothings; and the feeling which called this association into existence is about the most widely spread of all in the northern part of the States, for the true intent and meaning of their operations was hatred to the Irish, and a determination to keep the political power of the United States in what was considered more legitimate hands. And, finally, the Fenian circles shewed how prone the people of the States are to seize upon anything which involves mystery, and promises secret power. All these societies, be they called what they may, or let their ostensible objects be what they may, are but modifications or variations of Vigilance Committees, and owe their rise to a spirit of defence, which, when successful, easily becomes a spirit of aggression.

LADY LIVINGSTON'S LEGACY.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—THE READING OF THE WILL.

IN the cool and shaded drawing-room at the Dingle were collected several of those who had been assembled together in the banquet-hall of the dead nabob after Lady Livingston's funeral. The doctors, to be sure, were not there, nor the parochial clergy; but the relatives had hastened on the first summons to be present at the reading of the will. Mr Glegg, as he took his place beside the table on which lay the recovered document, was full of bustle and self-importance. That Honourable and Reverend Fleming who had officiated at the dowager's obsequies, was there; and so was Sir Frederick Dashwood, his worn, handsome face lit up by ignoble hopes of easily got wealth; and there was Oswald Charlton; and not far from him appeared the stooping form and anxious visage of the heir-at-law, John Fleming, who had come in hot haste from the Fountains to keep a jealous watch upon the proceedings that were to oust him from the inheritance which had been so rich a windfall. He stood a little apart from the other cousins, speaking little, save to his solicitor, a member of the Thavies' Inn firm, whom

he had brought down with him 'to protect his interests,' as he said. And Sergeant Flint, having been conversant with the various steps taken for the recovery of the will, was also of the company. So, at Oswald's wish, was Beatrice Fleming herself, although Mrs Dashwood was far too ill and too unnerved to be by the side of her young guest.

All manner of wild reports were in circulation as to the adventures of the lately missing testament, and yet it occurred to no one to question its authenticity. Even John, the heir-at-law, who had so much at stake, did not venture to express a doubt, but contented himself with whispering to his attorney, who stood at his elbow like a familiar spirit at that of a medieval necromancer, to keep his eyes and ears open for flaws, and to assure himself that the will was not one of those which will not, in technical phraseology, hold water.

'You will observe, gentlemen,' Mr Glegg had said by way of exordium, 'that the envelope of the document is in the same condition as when closed by my partner, Mr Goodeve; that it is regularly endorsed; and that the office seal, which my partner carried with him to the Fountains, has left an impression on the wax which has not been tampered with. That Lady Livingston had it among her papers, and that it was thence purloined at the moment of her sudden decease, is sufficiently proved by the logic of circumstances; and I have no hesitation in saying that I could establish this by *viva voce* evidence, were it necessary. I will now, with your permission, execute the duty which, when last we met in the dining-room of the Fountains, I had scanty hopes of being enabled to perform, that of breaking the seal, and of reading the will.'

The seal was broken, and the Last Will and Testament of the Right Honourable Lavinia, Dowager Baroness Livingston, was withdrawn from its envelope, opened, and smoothed out by the lawyer's practised hand. The very rustling of the paper, so different in degree from the rustling of other paper, caused all hearts to beat and all eyes to be attracted to the document before Mr Glegg. Then the attorney, himself slightly agitated—for was not this a will exceptional and peculiar above all those with which he had had to do?—read aloud the following provisions on the part of the testatrix. The bequests and gifts were many, but none were of great value. Certain jewels, pictures, and old china went to various old friends. Five hundred pounds, with a diamond brooch, went to console Mrs General Buckram for the loss of her liberal neighbour; and similar legacies and mementoes were bestowed on two or three others of the elderly recluses at Hampton Court. The old servants, with several aged and infirm pensioners of Lady Livingston's, received annuities. All the members of the establishment at the Fountains were more or less remembered in that substantial form of recollection which is the most appreciated. To Violet Maybrook was allotted a sum of two hundred pounds, free of legacy duty, 'to provide for her return home to Canada, should she be unmarried and desirous of quitting England, otherwise to be disposed of at her pleasure;' and with this gift of money, an emerald ring which the dowager often wore. Beatrice Fleming's name was set down in connection with a pearl cross and gold chain, 'given me by her dear mother long ago, and which I know she will value for the sake

of the associations.' But five or six thousand pounds represented the whole amount of the bequests, so far as money was concerned.

Now came the moment of real interest, as the lawyer, clearing his voice, commenced the recital. 'All my real and personal estate'—'to wit, Heavittree Hall'—'hum, hum, arable, coppice, pasture, fields, tenements, and messuages'—'in the Three per Cent. Consolidated, ahem'—'after payment of my just debts and the above-mentioned legacies'—were run over in the midst of breathless silence. Then came the words, 'heir and residuary legatee,' and all listened for the name that all expected to hear, the name of her who was well known to have been the dowager's favourite kinswoman and destined heiress. But to the wonder of all who heard it, and of the reciter himself, the name read out was that, not of Beatrice Fleming, but of 'my late lord's nephew, Oswald Charlton, Esquire, barrister-at-law.'

Then arose a clamour of voices, Oswald's being the loudest in the utterance of the surprise which he, in common with the rest, felt at this unlooked-for climax to the disposition of the dowager's effects.

'There must be some mistake in the wording of the will,' said the young man, rising from his chair, and coming up to where the lawyer was seated. 'It is perhaps as trustee, or as executor, that I am set down.'

'Excuse me, but there is no mistake at all,' persisted Mr Glegg: 'you are indeed executor, but it is no sinecure office which is thus assigned to you. Under the will, which is carefully drawn and clearly worded, Heavittree Hall, and all the property real and personal, charged with the legacies I have mentioned, go to you in absolute possession and fee-simple. There is no trust, no condition. The dowager, our esteemed client, has left you all as unreservedly as if you had been her own and only son.'

Dashwood now strode forward, and with his features distorted by passion, furiously struck the table with his clenched hand.

'This is some infamous trickery,' he cried aloud—'some rascally juggle! If the old witch really was in her right mind when she signed that trumpety jargon, there must have been undue influence employed to cause it. Why, her intentions towards my cousin Beatrice were known as if they had been gazetted.—Don't suppose, Mr Charlton, or whatever you call yourself, that I am the dupe of your pretended astonishment, well as you enact your part. It is not the first time that a smooth-spoken hypocrite'—

'For shame, Sir Frederick!' exclaimed three of the cousins with one breath; while Oswald drew himself up to his full height and looked his insulter calmly in the face.

'Your irritation is natural, Sir Frederick Dashwood,' he said quietly, 'although your mode of expressing it is unjust as well as offensive. I think no one here will disbelieve me when I say that this most singular will has been fully as great a source of astonishment to me as to any here. Heaven knows, I never harboured a thought of inheriting my aunt's property. I expected, as all expected, to hear Miss Fleming's name read out as'—

'By Jove! I see it now!' interrupted Dashwood, his voice quivering with anger. 'To spite me, by

Heaven! the old woman has done this. If Beatrice had but had the sense to keep silent as to the engagement! But no! She has ruined us both by her insisting on telling all to the capricious'—

'It is my turn now, Sir Frederick, to bid you be silent,' said Beatrice, coming forward with a firm but gentle dignity of bearing, before which the baronet stood rebuked. 'If no consideration towards the dead restrains you, I must at least insist that in my presence you do not wrong the memory of her who was to me, left motherless, all that a mother could have been.'

'And who has now left you a beggar,' said Dashwood sullenly.

'Her money was her own, and she was at liberty to bestow it on whom she would,' replied Beatrice with fearless composure. 'I do not love her the less, or pay less honour to her dear memory, because she has thought fit to leave the property elsewhere. Yes, I shall be very poor, as you have said, cousin. Nevertheless, if you hold me to my word, I am still ready to keep my promise, and'—

'And marry me—that's your meaning, is it?' broke in Dashwood, with a second blow upon the table that made the writing materials and Mr Glegg's spectacles leap uneasily up—and let us starve together! No, by George! I'm out of that trap, anyhow.'

'Am I to understand, Frederick Dashwood, that—you—relinquish'—Beatrice began, but her voice and her courage both failed her, and she clung for support to the chair beside her, and left the sentence incomplete.

The baronet morosely answered by a brutal laugh. 'You, Mr Glegg,' he said, turning to the lawyer, 'are you sure there's no codicil, or whatever idiotic name you call it by, tacked to the will, which alters matters?—You shake your head. And is the thing witnessed and dated, and the rest of it, so as to be binding?'

'Signed, sealed, and delivered, in due and proper form,' returned Mr Glegg, distantly; 'as your man of business, Sir Frederick, will doubtless inform you, should you desire to have the document professionally examined. There never was a will that left fewer loopholes for litigation.'

'So I see!' acknowledged John Fleming, with a groan. To the last, he had hoped for some informality to be detected, for some ambiguity of expression, something that would leave an opening for a triangular duel in the Court of Chancery, in which the Lord of Pinchbeck's weighty purse might perhaps outlast the resources of other claimants. But now he saw that resistance was hopeless, and his legal adviser from Thavies Inn saw it too. So John Fleming, heir-at-law, and who had forty-eight hours previously exercised all the rights of ownership, now came cringing up to Oswald, to deprecate any anger on his part as to certain cuttings-down of timber, serving notices of ejectment, and other unpopular measures which he had already taken at Heavitree, under the belief that all there was his very own. But Oswald was in no mood to discuss with the dispossessed inheritor of the Warwickshire property the details of its management. Turning to Dashwood, he addressed him in a tone that admitted of no denial: 'Sir Frederick, I take the company here to witness that Miss Beatrice Fleming, your cousin, has most honourably offered to fulfil her engagement of marriage, of long standing, as all

well know, with yourself. You have yet to give your answer.'

'I know no right which you have to champion my cousin's cause, or to interrogate me,' answered Dashwood gruffly, but with less insolence of manner than before. 'But since you seem so interested in the subject, I'll tell you that I have no more intention of marrying the young lady you speak of than I have of cutting my throat—not so much, perhaps. I'm a poor man, and could not afford the luxury of a wife, unless she had enough for both. I have waited, and hoped, for the chance of the dowager's fortune for years, and now it is lost, I cry off! and there's an end of it.'

'You give me back my promise? you release me from it? Say so, Sir Frederick, and be generous for once!' said Beatrice imploringly; and then she covered her face with her hands, and sank sobbing into a chair.

'I release you, if that's what you want me to say,' replied Sir Frederick impatiently. 'I hate a scene, and I have nothing to keep me here any longer; so, good-bye to you all;' and he turned to look for his hat, when the sound of Violet Maybrook's name struck upon his ear, and he turned towards a knot of the by-standers which had gathered around Sergeant Flint, and the members of which were eagerly discussing in an undertone the circumstances of the late arrest.

'What's that you say?' asked Dashwood bluntly; and then added: 'I beg your pardon. I am excited, and that sort of thing. But what was it you were saying about Miss Maybrook having been here?'

'We were merely saying,' returned the Honourable and Reverend Fleming, 'how distressing a thing it was for poor Mrs Philip Dashwood. Good heavens! In her very house, before her very eyes, a young person, for whom, as I understand, she had always shewn the greatest affection, to be arrested for the murder of the poor lady's own child, a crime so cruel and causeless'—

'Murder! You must have been misinformed, Mr Fleming, if it is of Violet—of Miss Maybrook—that you speak!' gasped out Sir Frederick, his dry lips having some apparent difficulty in forming the words; but his manner instantly attracting every eye towards him.

The Honourable and Reverend Fleming shook his head.

'Unfortunately, I am not in error,' he said, with some real feeling; 'were it so, poor Mrs Philip would have been spared a cruel stab to a heart that had suffered enough already; and that unhappy girl, who, as I am told, scarcely attempted to deny her guilt when taxed with it by the eye-witness, Miss Larpent, would have a less awful reckoning to face before human and divine justice. The motive, indeed, is as yet mere matter of conjecture; but'—

'She could have had no motive. If she did it, she must have been mad; but I, for one, do not believe the story. It was an accident. Every one knew'—

Here the baronet faltered in his speech, and looked uneasily around him. His face was blanched, suddenly, to an ashen pallor, and his very lips were white, and he seemed to shrink into himself, as if he had lost some inches of his tall stature, while his bloodshot eyes met, resentfully, every inquiring glance that was bent upon him.

'I do not wonder you are shocked, Sir Frederick,' said some one near him. 'You were in Canada, I think, at the time'—

'I was. And what of that?' demanded Dashwood fiercely; and then bit his lip, as if in anger against himself for the imprudent words. 'I beg your pardon,' he added—'this dreadful news—yes, the poor little boy'—

He snatched up his hat, and pulled out his watch, muttering something about business in London, and shook hands with two or three of those nearest to him, and so edged his way towards the door. Sergeant Flint, narrowly observing him, dropped his hand into a side coat-pocket, and seemed to finger something there concealed, something that opened softly, and shut with a sharp snap, as if its steel jaws had hungered to inclose a pair of manacled wrists. But Sir Frederick left the room without hinderance, and his departure was an evident source of relief to all present. Beatrice Fleming had gone also, resisting Oswald's whispered request that she would remain, and was weeping up-stairs in Mrs Dashwood's chamber. Nor did the assembly continue very long in session, the business of the day being done. There were refreshments laid out for them in another room, and of these they partook; and there was clinking of wine-glasses and rattling of forks, while the two chief topics of conversation were, naturally, the unexpected disposal of Lady Livingston's property, and the strange behaviour of the baronet. The former of these two subjects had necessarily to be discussed with some degree of reticence, owing to the presence of the new owner of Heavitree, and of the late one in the person of the heir-at-law. But no such reason seemed to bridle men's tongues as related to Dashwood's remarkable agitation on hearing of Violet's arrest.

'I suppose the explanation simply is, that he was in love with her,' said somebody: 'he was quartered for a long time in Montreal, which was her native place.'

'I can scarcely suspect Sir Frederick of a disinterested attachment,' sententiously rejoined the Honourable and Reverend Fleming. 'If ever I saw Fear written on a man's face, I saw it to-day. If he had been going to be hanged, he could scarcely have been more pale.'

Sergeant Flint, who was eating at a side-table, overheard this remark, and again lovingly fingered the handcuffs in his pocket. And soon afterwards the party broke up, Oswald lingering the last, and endeavouring, but in vain, to obtain a few moments' speech of Beatrice before leaving.

'Tell Miss Fleming that she shall hear from me from London,' was the simple message which he sent before quitting the house.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—GIVEN AND TAKEN.

'Is Miss Fleming at home? Ah! and Mrs Dashwood? better in health, but not recovered, eh? Well, don't disturb her on my account. Tell Miss Beatrice Fleming that Mr Glegg—Goodeve and Glegg—is here on business which concerns her—business of great, of very great importance.'

It was Mr Glegg who spoke at the door of Mrs Philip Dashwood's pretty residence, the Dingle, and it was now precisely one week, day for day, since Mr Glegg's last visit to Whitborne, on the

occasion of the reading of the will. He had not to wait very long before Beatrice, looking sad, pale, and fair, like a sweet, pure lily, came into the drawing-room, wherein so many events had of late taken place, of a nature quite foreign to the peaceful antecedents of that hitherto quiet nook. The windows were open, and the fragrant creepers still formed a screen through which the sea-breeze was filtered, and whence still came the busy hum of bees, making the most of every shining hour for the emolument of the winged commonwealth. What, to flower, or bee, or to the thrush that shewed his speckled breast, and poured forth his clear, fresh carol, on the lawn beyond, signified human cares and passions, Violet's imputed crime, Mrs Dashwood's sorrow, Sir Frederick's despairing fury, or the pang with which the dowager's heir-at-law resigned the fat heritage that he had clutched so readily?

'Miss Fleming, your most obedient! This poor Mrs Philip—better, I gather, but far from well! yes; that was to be expected,' began the lawyer, rubbing his hands together, so that the rings he wore tinkled faintly as they met. 'But my business to-day is with yourself, and permit me, Miss Beatrice, to say, that in the whole range of my professional experience, I have never undertaken to execute a similar errand to that with which my client, Mr Oswald Charlton, has this day charged me.' At the mention of Oswald's name a slight tinge of colour rose to Beatrice's pale cheek, but she merely bowed, and allowed Mr Glegg to continue. 'The document which I have brought with me is one of great, nay, of the greatest importance. It is not, as you see, very voluminous, and suiting the action to the word, the solicitor laid upon the table a thin blue packet of folded paper, endorsed in legal copperplate; but it has been well drawn and carefully revised, and I may add that it has been more rapidly prepared, in consequence of the urgency of my client's pressing request, than any settlement or mortgage deed that ever left our office. The character of its contents, Miss Fleming, I can briefly indicate. You are aware, as we all are, that under the late Lady Livingston's will, so marvellously recovered, Mr Charlton takes the whole property.'

'Yes; I know that it is so,' said Beatrice, smiling; 'but I cannot see what I'—

'Have to do with the matter,' put in Mr Glegg; 'and, indeed, you must be surprised at my coming here to recapitulate what is already known. This is a deed of gift, by which Mr Oswald Charlton at once makes over Heavitree Hall and its acres, the money in the funds, and, ahem! all real and personal property accruing to him in virtue of Lady Livingston's will, freely and unconditionally, to yourself.' And the lawyer leant back in his chair, as if to enjoy the amazement of the listener.

'To me!' said Beatrice, with the simple wonder of a child.

'To Miss Beatrice Fleming, her heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns, read out Mr Glegg, with his eyes upon the folio sheets now open before him. 'Mr Charlton earnestly begged me to remind you, should you feel any delicacy as to the acceptance of so magnificent a present, that in doing as he does, he is merely fulfilling what were unquestionably her ladyship's intentions during the last years of her life; that she was in the habit of describing you as her heiress, and the future

mistress of Heavitree, to all with whom she conversed in a confidential manner; and that, in undertaking the search for the stolen will, he was acting solely with a view to your benefit, and in no sense for his own. To receive the gift in the same frank and loyal spirit in which it is made, is what he entreats you to do, firmly resolved as he is, never to profit by the unlooked-for liberality posthumously evinced by Lady Livingston towards himself.

'Is that—all—that Mr. Charlton has asked you to say to me?' asked Beatrice, speaking very slowly, and after a pause. The lawyer replied in the affirmative.

'Nothing,' he said, 'prevented my client, immediately on the reading of the will, from publicly renouncing the rights thus acquired in favour of Lady Livingston's natural heiress, save the fear that he should thus expose you to a renewal of Sir Frederick Dashwood's mercenary courtship. That danger, however, was averted. We all heard the baronet distinctly release you from your promise, if, indeed, any such pledge would be held binding to a man whose only alternative has been between the disgrace of flight and the ignominy of a felon's death.'

'How!' exclaimed Beatrice, starting as she heard these ominous words; 'what has he done so dreadful as to bring upon him consequences such as these of which you speak? I knew him to be wild and reckless, but—'

'Ah, my dear young lady,' intervened the more worldly-wise solicitor, 'when you come to be as old, and to have seen as much of the shady side of human nature as I have done, you will be better able to understand the potentiality of mischief that exists beneath a showy outside. But at any rate, some paper was found artfully concealed, which it appeared that Miss Maybrook always carried about her person, and the contents of which were a formal promise of marriage, in the handwriting of Captain (not then Sir Frederick) Dashwood, and signed by him. This, of itself, would be nothing, but the wording of the compact is compromising in the highest degree, for it goes on to say: "Should I, through her act, become heir to my grandfather's baronetcy;" and the meaning of this, when read by the light thrown upon it by Miss Larpent's revelations, is only too clear.'

'Horrible! most horrible!' said Beatrice, shuddering; 'this will be a new grief to poor Mrs Dashwood, who never thought worse of Sir Frederick than that he was indolent and wasteful, and even to me, little cause as I had to like or to esteem him, it is sad to hear it—if it is really possible that he could have plotted against the life of a poor child. But it is too monstrous to be true, surely, surely, Mr Glegg?'

'Unluckily, Miss Fleming,' answered the lawyer, 'your cousin has made a virtual confession by absconding; though, indeed, by so doing, he has, up to the present time, eluded arrest. I, for one, should not be sorry were he never to be brought to the bar of human justice; not from any sympathy with such a wretch—quite Richard III. over again—but then, the disgrace to the family! Nor is it likely that if he gets clear of England, and of British law, he will escape the punishment that must follow a needy, broken fugitive, skulking on the frontiers of the civilised world, and ever fearful of being recognised and brought back under some

treaty of extradition. As for Miss Maybrook, she has been taken before a magistrate, but the crime of which she is accused comes under the jurisdiction of a colonial court, not an imperial one. So soon as certain formalities have been complied with, she is to be sent to Canada, there to take her trial. Hitherto, there has been some difficulty as regards the evidence— But I don't think you quite follow me, Miss Fleming.'

'No. I was thinking,' said Beatrice, looking up, 'what an escape from worse than death had been mine!'

'Indeed it has,' returned the lawyer, cordially; 'though I admit that none of us suspected Sir Frederick to be quite so black as he has since been painted. But with respect to the business in hand, what answer may I take back to my client—as refers, I mean, to the deed of gift?'

'The gift! I accept it,' answered Beatrice, simply.

'I am very glad to hear it,' said the solicitor, 'and so will Mr Charlton be, I am sure. I never knew any man more eager to acquire a property than he has been to get quit of this one. So if you will kindly sign this acknowledgment, my work will be complete, and you shall be placed in possession of your rights without an instant's unnecessary delay. The will was proved, I may as well mention, with unusual expedition; but then there was no one to oppose probate, since Mr John Fleming preferred to make a virtue of necessity, and the proctor did his work quickly. So if you will kindly sign here, where you see the red wafers and the pencil marks, and again here, and here, I shall not have to trouble you any further.'

'Took it,' said Mr Glegg to himself, as he looked from the window of his first-class carriage, in the up-train that bore him back to busy London—'took it, as a child takes a raspberry-jam tart, and apparently quite as much as a matter of course. No doubt, no hesitation, none of those delicate scruples of which my Quixote of a client was so much afraid. After all, who could have the stoicism to refuse that snug place in Warwickshire, with its meadows and its fields, coal-pit, coppice, hedge-row timber, and park of fat fallow deer browsing so contentedly beside that reedy, swan-haunted mere that they call the lake? And then Mr Glegg fell to speculating on the probabilities of Beatrice's future life. Would she marry? Of that there was, he thought, but little doubt. And would she, or her husband, whoever he might be, put faith in another attorney, or continue to manage the property and to receive the rents per Goodeve and Glegg, as had for years been the habit of the dowager? The firm would still go on under the old flag, even though poor Mr Samuel Goodeve should never again darken the doors of the Bedford Row office with his bodily presence. The unfortunate senior partner had somewhat improved in health since the miserable night when he was brought helpless home, but he was very feeble and childish, mentally considered; and one of his daughters was already on her way, overland, from Lucknow, to assist in tending 'poor papa.'

It was late in the evening when a commissionaire shewed his medalled breast and empty coat-sleeve on the stairs of Oswald's chambers, bearing a note from Mr Glegg, informing the unwilling heir that his proffer to cede Lady

Livingston's bequest had been immediately accepted, and the acknowledgment signed. It would not be accurate to assert that Oswald's feelings, on perusing this missive, were those of unmixed pleasure. It was quite true that his chief fear had been lest Beatrice, through reserve, or pride, or a not unnatural reluctance to be enriched through his divesting himself of the fortune which had so strangely descended to him, should decline the great gift which he had urged upon her. Over and over again did he tell himself that he was unfeignedly glad that no such impediment had occurred, that he was well rid of Heavitree and its belongings, and that what he had done was but an act of simple justice, calling for no peculiar gratitude. Yet, somehow, Mr Glegg's note seemed unsatisfactory, and Beatrice to have been perhaps over-ready to take the splendid present, without apparently much thought of the bestower. Then he chid himself for this feeling of groundless discontent, averring that lawyers' epistles were always dry and ungracious in style; and that he was wrong to expect that Beatrice should see, in what he had done, anything beyond a mere restoration to herself of what was fairly hers. 'I should not wonder,' he said, as he threw away the end of his cigar, 'if my poor old aunt really intended this bequest to be a sort of secret trust, for Beatrice's benefit, since Lady Livingston must have had a shrewd guess that this leaving the property away from her would serve to free her from that luckless pledge to Dashwood. What a Machiavel, in her proper sphere of marrying and giving in marriage, the dear old woman must have been! Why, if the baronet had not been blinded by his own short-sighted selfishness, he need not have fallen so readily into the trap. He had but to hold Beatrice to her word— But then, again, he probably judged of my conduct by his own: and, besides, the fellow must have been miserable indeed, always, waking or sleeping, with a rope around his guilty neck. I don't wonder that he was not as ready-witted at an emergency as he might otherwise have been. And Beatrice—yes, she will be rich now, and, I hope, happy.'

In the morning, however, the postman on his early rounds brought him the following letter, bearing the Whitborne postmark:

'Mr Glegg will have told you, I daresay, how I accepted your generous—your more than generous proposal to give me all that our dear, dear old friend left by her will to you. And I am afraid, too, that he has reported my behaviour as that of a very graceless and ungrateful little creature, because I did not even ask him to thank you for your great goodness to me. I do so now, from my heart; and I am not proud enough or foolish enough to feel any false shame at taking, from your hand, such a gift. On one condition, however, do I agree to this; and as I could not bring myself to speak of *that* to the lawyer, I preferred to say nothing—but my mind was made up at once. I am free now, and I accept, along with your splendid present of the inheritance, that other offer which you formerly made to me, beside the fountains, in the dear old garden at Richmond. If I were to add the conventional words, "should you still be of the same mind," I should be self-convicted of a bit of silly affectation, and you would have a right to scold me for it. But I know you love me, dear; know that your brave, true heart

has not cooled towards me, although it is possible—we women are taught from childhood to conceal our feelings—that you may be less certain of my regard for you. If so, doubt me no longer. You never, never can guess the bitter, bitter pang with which I submitted to give you up, in obedience to my dead mother's wish, and in fulfilment of a solemn pledge, now happily at an end. I owe it to you, dear Oswald, to tell you that, of my own free will, I accept both your offers; and my acceptance of one is conditional on the other's being still your wish, as it is that of

BEATRICE FLEMING.'

The note ended almost abruptly, as it had begun without the customary prefix. We may safely conjecture, however, that more than one sheet of paper had been spoiled in the vain attempts of the writer to content herself by commencing with 'Dear Mr Charlton,' 'Dear Oswald,' and the like. And Oswald guessed somewhat of this, as he pressed the letter to his lips again and again. He was happy now. Strange magic of the pen, when a few lines of black and white can make all the difference between rapturous joy and brooding care!

SEA-FISH AND OYSTERS.

We can remember when oysters were sold for sixpence a hundred—now they are from eighteenpence to two shillings a dozen; when a fresh haddock could be got for twopence—now it is six or eight times that modest price; when a cod was sold for ninepence, and is now cheap at about five shillings; when herrings were commonly three for a penny—now, except when there is a glut, you are well off in buying them at a penny or three-halfpence each. And so on with the cost of many other kinds of fish and molluscs. Such an enormous rise in the cost of this kind of food is curious, and a little perplexing. As the sea on all sides is generally believed to be stocked with animal life as abundantly as it was fifty, a hundred, or a thousand years ago—in fact, to be capable of yielding more food than all the hills and plains of Britain—the wonder is how the dearth should have arisen. The harvest being great, is there any deficiency of reapers?

While troubled to answer this and other questions on the subject, there comes forward an enthusiast, James G. Bertram, who, for half a lifetime, has thought of little else than about fish and oysters; travelling from place to place, picking up knowledge in his favourite pursuit, he has written a book (*Harvest of the Sea*, third edition), packed from beginning to end with amusing and instructive matters of a fishy nature, and coming to us exactly when such information is wanted. As regards oysters, in which there has been such a revolution in price, the explanation offered is, that the beds of these molluscs have been much overdrugged, the very young when attaining shape having been ruthlessly carried away. The Firth of Forth, whence, in particular, quantities of cheap oysters used to come, has been plundered without mercy. The

same thing is told of oyster-fishing on the coast of France. Oyster-farms which formerly employed fourteen hundred men, with two hundred boats, became so reduced as to require only one hundred men, and twenty boats. Then arose a clamour as to what should be done. It was resolved to try how oysters could artificially be made a subject of culture. Such had been done successfully at Whitstable and Colne in England, and likewise in Italy, at the famed Lake of Avernus. With information procured from these quarters, an immense system of oyster-production was commenced at Ile Ré, near Rochelle; not only in the sea, but in artificial ponds called *claires*, into which the sea was admitted; the keeping of these ponds constantly full of sea-water being indispensable.

Mr Bertram describes the process of rearing. 'The secret,' he says, 'consists simply in giving a holding-place for the oyster spat. Strong pillars of wood were driven into the mud and sand; arms were added; the whole were interlaced with branches of trees, and various boughs besides were hung over the beds on ropes and chains; whilst others were sunk in the water, and kept down by a weight. A few boat-loads of oysters being laid down, the spat had no distance to travel in search of a home, but found a resting-place almost at the moment of being exuded; and, as the fairy legends say, it grew and grew till, in the fullness of time, it became a marketable commodity.' The project was thoroughly successful, and yielded to many a profit of one thousand per cent. A vast quantity of oysters were produced almost, as we might say, out of nothing—at least, nothing but sea-water. A good deal depends, however, on the nature of the muddy bottom of the *claires*, marl being best; the mud and the sea being congenial in supporting the infusoria which are the food of the oyster. It is not pleasant to add that a period of prosperity was followed by disaster. Out of a spirit of greed, the old practice of over-dredging was revived; and, as in the case of the goose which was killed for the sake of its golden eggs, the oyster-harvest came to an end by leaving nothing for future propagation. The moral to be drawn is, that, in the interests of the community, dredging for oysters requires to be strictly regulated by law, just as grouse-shooting is illegal until the 12th of August.

To meet the great demand in London, where the consumption is estimated at a thousand millions of oysters per annum, there is a most extensive system of gathering small oysters on the coasts of Essex and Kent, and selling them to the Whitstable people, who carefully lay the brood in their grounds. Our author speaks pathetically of the factitious London process of feeding oysters. 'The London oysters—and I regret to say it, for there is nothing finer than a genuine oyster—are sophisticated in the cellars of the buyers, by being stuffed with oatmeal till the flavour is all but lost in the fat. The flavour of oysters, like the flavour of all other animals, depends on their feeding. The fine *goût* of the highly relished Prestonpans oysters is said to be derived from the fact of their feeding on the refuse liquor which flows from the salt-pans in

that neighbourhood;' and hence spoken of as *Pandores*. The oysters near Kinsale harbour are alleged to have been also remarkable for their quality; we put them in the past tense, for being overfished, they have long since disappeared, 'much to the loss of the Irish people, who are particularly fond of oysters, and delight in their *Poldoodics*.'

It is a prevalent notion among Scotch fishermen that oysters may be so charmed with singing as to fall an easy prey to the dredger. And so goes an old rhyme:

The herring loves the merry moonlight;
The mackerel loves the wind;
But the oyster loves the dredger's song,
For he comes of a gentle kind.

During the whole time of dredging, a monotonous song or hum is accordingly kept up. It is stated that talking is strictly forbidden, and that all the requisite conversation is kept up in a kind of recitative chant. With what advantage the practice is pursued, we know not, but we acknowledge that there is in it something picturesque and poetical.

All that can be recorded about oyster-eating in this country or France, falls far short of the consumption of this popular mollusc in the United States. On this point, we can personally corroborate Mr Bertram's observations. Dredged at various places along the coast, they are distributed by means of railways and steam-boats to places far inland. We have seen them for sale in the far remote parts of Canada, as well as the States. In New York, Philadelphia, and elsewhere, the custom is to eat oysters cooked, the preparation taking place mostly in oyster-cellars, situated beneath the shops, fronting the street. As far as we could see, negroes have a monopoly of the trade; and it was stated that no one can excel them in the art of cooking and serving up oysters. Baltimore, in Maryland, is said to be the great oyster-market. In that city, says Mr Bertram, 'it is not uncommon for one or two firms each to "can" a million bushels in one year! Immense numbers of these "canned" oysters are despatched all over the States to the prairies of the far west, to the cities of New Mexico, to the military forts of the great American desert, to the restaurants of Honolulu, and to the miners searching for gold on the Rocky Mountains; whilst fresh oysters, packed in ice, have been sent to great distances. In the oyster-fisheries of Maryland, as many as six hundred vessels, of about twenty-three tons each, are engaged, in addition to two thousand small boats and canoes. Altogether, at least two thousand men are thus remuneratively employed.'

Within recollection, the business of fishing for cod, haddocks, and other white fish, in England as well as Scotland, was in the hands of ancient communities, scattered along the coast, whose apparatus consisted of open boats propelled by sails and oars, with nets and hooked lines. It was a simple system, socially interesting, which served its day. It can do so no longer. The old-fashioned methods of catching fish are wholly inadequate to meet modern wants, and need to be largely supplemented by fleets of decked vessels, and other appliances adapted for fishing far away beyond the region over which the fishermen of former times plied their hazardous craft. The nearer fishing-

grounds for boats being, in most cases, greatly exhausted by over-netting and hooking, is one material reason for the dearth of white fish. Another and equally obvious reason is railway transit. 'The railways,' it is observed, 'which have altered so many conditions of life and trade, have changed the whole system of fish-commerce.' Thousands of tons of our best food-fishes are now borne daily from the sea to the great inland seats of population, where there is a sure and steady demand for as much as can be sent. The quantity secured by deep-sea fishing is enormous. 'It is said that there are at present a thousand trawlers employed for the London market; and if each of these vessels takes about one hundred tons per annum, we should find that nearly one hundred thousand tons of large fish are taken every year, in addition to the abundant supplies of herring, mackerel, sprats, &c. which are being constantly forwarded day by day to the great metropolis.' Were the estimate extended to the whole country, we should imagine it would be double this amount.

The account of Mr. Bertram's visit to the large establishment for breeding various kinds of fresh-water fish at Huningue, near Basle, forms not the least interesting part of his work. As the artificial breeding of salmon and trout is of considerable importance to the inhabitants of towns situated near lakes and rivers, we propose dealing with the subject separately. The mackerel and pilchard fisheries on the south coast of England, as also the fishings on the French side of the Channel, receive due notice from the writer, but what is said respecting them falls short of the description of that vast branch of maritime industry, the herring-fishery on the east and west coasts of Scotland.

Herrings, as is well known, swim about in immense shoals, miles in length and breadth, coming to and going from particular stretches of sea, in what seems a rather capricious manner. There have been several theories respecting these irregular migratory habits. One thing appears to be certain: they obey the instinct which leads them to favourite spots for feeding, and also for spawning. That instinct, however, is universal in fish. They do not go where there is a deficiency of their appropriate food. The Mediterranean, for example, has no fish worth speaking of, except the sardine. The reason is, that there being no recession of tides, and consequently no sea-weeds to encourage the growth of crustacea, as food for fishes, the water contains comparatively little animal life. The food of the herring is believed to consist chiefly of minute crustaceans and floating infusoria, but small fishes are also devoured. The quality of the herring is very various, and is evidently dependent on the nature of the feeding-ground. None is equal in richness and delicacy of flavour to that captured in Loch Fyne, that extended inlet of the sea reaching to Inverary, and on which Ardrishaig may be called the metropolis of herrings. Various localities have such marked differences in size, shape, and quality, that an expert can at a glance as easily distinguish a Loch Fyne herring from one caught in the Firth of Forth, as a pastoral farmer can tell a Cheviot sheep from a Southdown. When the herring is in its fattest and best condition, it is called by fisher-people a *matie*. In buying, connoisseurs take care to get *maties*. There is another technicality worth know-

ing. When caught, the herrings are reckoned by crans; a cran being a measure of forty-five gallons.

The boats required in the herring-fishery, although open, are of considerable size, in order to contain the large quantity of nets which are used, as well as to bring home the mass of fish that may be taken. Along the Scottish coast, from Aberdeen northwards, fishing for herrings is a staple profession; the culminating point being Wick in Caithness. In July and August, when the capture chiefly takes place, you hear of scarcely anything else talked but about herrings. The whole population is agog on the subject. 'Ony fish this mornin'?' is the first salutation of one neighbour to another. 'At Wick, the native inhabitants, augmented by four thousand strangers, waken into renewed life; it is like Doncaster on the approach of the St Leger.' All brightens up at the prospect of the fishery; the shops being fresh painted outside, and newly replenished within. The strangers who make their appearance are what are called the 'hired hands.' Many of them are small farmers from the Hebrides, who come to earn an honest penny, wherewith to pay their rent. The streaming away of the boats to the fishing-ground, is a sight worth seeing, for perils of the deep have to be encountered, and the female part of the population look on the departure with corresponding anxiety. Vast as is the trade, it is unfortunately said to be on an unhealthy footing. There are a few independent fishermen who own boats and nets, and have means to hire hands. But in very many cases, money needs to be advanced by curers, who bargain for so many crans, paying the money long in advance, and even lending sums for the purchase of boats and nets. As there is no absolute certainty that there will be a good fishing season, the money advanced may not be redeemed, and scenes of distress ensue. Mr. Bertram mentions that too frequently the sums advanced 'are spent in the public-houses.' Thousands of pounds are so dissipated months before the fishing begins. When the season proves a favourable one, all is well, the money is repaid, yet, for want of a proper degree of economy, the error of borrowing is repeated. At some few places, this unhappy system of putting labour in pawn to capitalists, has been relinquished; and it would be a good thing if it were everywhere abandoned.

The uncertainty of the catch leads to superstitious notions about 'luck,' by trusting to which, there is little social advancement. We know fishing villages which, with no want of profitable industry, are just what they were half a century ago. Instead of accumulating capital, and taking the lead in commerce, the toiling inhabitants of these places have allowed outsiders to carry away their trade, and still they toil on in their comparatively small way as in days of yore. 'It is notable,' says our author, 'that after a favourable season, the weddings among the fishing populations are very numerous. The anxiety for a good season may be noted all along the British coasts, from Newhaven to Yarmouth, or from Crail to Wick.'

The Scottish herring-fishery is strictly regulated by act of parliament. It has been gravely doubted whether it is worth while to enforce rules as to size of mesh in nets, or to forbid trawling; for all that man can possibly capture is insignificant in comparison with the quantity of fish produced, or the quantity destroyed by natural enemies in the deep. As the roe of each female herring is

said to yield in a season 68,000 young, it is difficult to see what impression can be made on the shoals by any kind of fishing. It is, at all events, satisfactory to know that the Scottish fisheries in all departments depend exclusively on private enterprise. They cost the public nothing. Indeed, the crown makes a profit on them; the small fee paid to government officers for branding barrels of herrings as a guarantee of being properly cured, producing a sum which leaves a considerable surplus after paying expenses. It would be difficult for any one who has not been at Wick to conceive the scene of bustle at the time of herring-curing. One firm possessing fifty stations, employs 10,000 people, and turns over in connection with this branch of commerce £500,000 per annum. The money value of the boats and nets employed in the fishings for herring and sprats in Scotland, is nearly a million. The take of herrings in the year 1870 is set down as having been the greatest as yet authoritatively recorded. This, however, according to newspaper reports, seems to have been considerably exceeded by the catch in 1873, which amounted to 475,437 crans, or nearly twenty-one and a half millions of gallons! So prodigious were the hauls at some places, that the curers could not keep pace with them, and fishermen had for a few days to be kept from going to sea. The herrings when cured are to a large extent exported to foreign countries. A by no means small portion are sent to Ireland, the valuable fisheries of which country remain, unfortunately, in a still backward condition.

W. C.

LEAVES FROM AN OLD DIARY.

THERE is no man so insignificant in mental capacity as to be incapable of furnishing both information and amusement by a diary of what he merely observes and hears; and the greater the distance the writer is removed from us by time, the more interesting does such a legacy become. A compilation of this description, unfortunately in a very fragmentary state, has recently been brought under our notice. It appears to have been a journal of remarkable occurrences, kept by some resident in the metropolis, just a hundred years ago. Nothing is recorded in it, perhaps, that might not have been recorded by anybody else; yet, scanty as the relics of the writer's labours are, they contain many things that are new to our own days, and form altogether a very entertaining sort of miscellany. We give here the principal portions of them.

1771, June 27.—Went to see the *Maid of Bath*, performed for the first time at the Haymarket Theatre. Saw there Lord Lyttleton, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr Johnson, Garrick, and Goldsmith. In that part of the play where the friends of old Sir Solomon Flint are endeavouring to disabuse him of his passion for the heroine, and warning him of the expenses that will attend his wedding—'You must have,' says Billy Button (who, by-the-by, is intended to represent a Mr G—, a tailor, at Bath), 'new liveries and a new wardrobe, if you go with your bride to London; for everybody there judges of persons according to their appearance.'

'Ay, ay,' replies Sir Solomon; 'I don't mind that; I can have a wardrobe at a very reasonable rate; for you must know, the person who is come down here to marry us is a great patriot, a profound politician: he was some time ago a fine gentleman; but having met with some misfortunes at Paris, was obliged to leave several laced suits of clothes in pawn at that metropolis, which he has promised to let me have upon the most moderate terms. So that I shall make a figure very cheaply with the parson's finery.' This smart allusion to parson Horne—afterwards better known as Horne Tooke—and his Parisian follies was so well taken by the audience, that after several loud bursts of applause, they would not suffer the piece to go on till the passage was repeated.

June 29.—Never did candidates bribe so high as the present candidates for the shrievalty; for, by Mr Oliver and his colleagues, we are promised a reduction in the price of provisions; by Mr Wilkes, the preservation of our liberties; and by Mr Kirkman & Co. a great and glorious restoration to our senses, of which, that gentleman insinuates, we have for some time taken leave. Time will shew whether eating, bawling, or court-sorring be the order of the day. More bets are depending on the event of the present poll for sheriffs, than were ever known on any former occasion. . . . Messrs Wilkes and Bull elected.

July 26.—Went to Windsor, and was much delighted with witnessing the grand installation of Knights of the Garter. Among the knights installed were the Prince of Wales, and the Bishop of Osnaburg (afterwards Frederick, Duke of York). The Prince and his brother were not required to take the oaths, on account of their tender age; they are two noble-looking youths. After the dinner came the scramble, but in a style somewhat different from the old use and wont. The lord-steward thought it a better plan of economy to carry the victuals to the mob, than to let the mob come to the victuals. Accordingly, the windows of the castle were thrown open, and the provisions tossed out to the gaping crowd below. A cloud of hams, chickens, pasties, haunches, and delicacies of every kind, with knives, forks, plates, table-cloths, and napkins, darkened the air. This was succeeded by showers of liquor, some conveyed in bottles properly corked, but the greater part in rain. The scramble was more diverting than any other part of the preceding farce. You would see one stooping for a fowl, and a great ham falling plump upon his back; another having a fork stuck in his shoulder, and looking up to secure himself from more arrows thus flying by day, receiving a creamed apple-pie full in his face.

After funning, too often comes mischief. The Middlesex bargemen, it seems, had vowed to be revenged on the Irish chairmen for their sanguinary behaviour on the day of Sir William Beauchamp Proctor's standing the poll for Middlesex; and they took this occasion of carrying their design into execution. The scramble had no sooner

ended than a dreadful battle ensued between the two parties. The Irishmen repulsed two severe and desperate attacks from the bargemen; but the latter, rallying a third time with additional forces and additional courage, got the better of the chairmen, several of whom were left dead on the spot.

July 27.—Sir John Murray, late Secretary to the Pretender, was, on Thursday night, carried off by a party of strange men, from a house in Denmark Street, near St Giles's Church, where he has lived some time. An explanation of this curious affair appears in a paper of this morning, from which we extract as follows: 'Let your readers know that a peace-officer, his two sons, and two servants (neither ruffians nor braves), unarmed, and without violence, attended him, and prevailed upon him to leave a house where the meanest mechanics of different denominations gratified their curiosity, and boasted of their interviews with "mad Secretary Murray." They neither rushed into, but were peaceably admitted into his apartment, nor bound, nor put a strait-waistcoat upon, nor extorted a cry from him. The neighbourhood was neither alarmed nor apprised of the affair till some time after the coach left it, nor would have been so, but through the means of his late landlady; that he was, with every mark of tenderness and respect, conveyed to, and placed under the care of Dr Battio; give them (that is, the readers), if you please, for authority, the name of your humble servant, **ROBERT MURRAY.**'

It is interesting to note that the Robert Murray who offers the explanation regarding the abduction of his father, Secretary Murray, was an actor of some celebrity at the time. His son was William Murray, an excellent comedian, long the manager of the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh; and his daughter became Mrs. Henry Siddons, a most ladylike and charming actress, who has left no equal in the northern capital. Few, perhaps, are aware that William Murray and his sister were grandchildren of Sir John Murray of Broughton.

July 29.—Died at Llangollen, Denbighshire, Owen Tudor, aged one hundred and twenty-one; a descendant from Henry, the seventh Duke of Richmond. He served the office of high-sheriff for that county in the year 1770. He enjoyed so good a state of health that it is not remembered that he had a day's illness for these fifty years past, and was very hearty till within three days of his death.

August 15.—Much talk of a proposition, which one of the ministers is said to have made to the king, to assemble the parliament next winter at Oxford, should there be any likelihood of a repetition of the late popular disturbances. His Majesty was very angry with the author of this advice, and replied warmly, 'that a rabble should never drive him from the metropolis of his kingdom.'

August.—Married at Isleworth, the king of the gipsies' daughter to a second husband. The princess is about twenty-two years of age, and her spouse about seventeen. About twenty couple walked from the *Bell* to the church, and returned in like manner to the same place, after the ceremony was performed; only, as they went, the women leaned on the men; but on the return back, the men leaned on the women. The dinner was

served under the four elms on Hounslow Heath, and forty gipsies sat down together. There was plenty of all kinds of provisions, *fowls not excepted*, and the best sorts of liquors. When they had done, the by-standers, to the number of some hundreds, regaled themselves with what was left. The bridegroom's pockets were well lined with gold, and the bride's father declared he would give this scion of his royal house one thousand pounds for her dowry.

October 17.—Intelligence received of the death of Lord Baltimore, at Naples, on the 4th ultimo. Dying without issue, the title becomes extinct. His lordship was proprietary of the province of Maryland, and is supposed to have died worth a million sterling. Previous to his going to Italy, his friend E— asked him for the loan of three hundred pounds. His lordship pretended not to have as much to spare; but on the day before his departure, having called to take leave of E—, he requested him to accept a large silver medallion of Queen Anne, as a token of remembrance. In the hollow of this medallion, E— found the three hundred pounds inclosed.

December 9.—The Jew doctor and other Jews concerned in the murder and robbery at Mrs Hutchins's, at Chelsea, executed this morning, at Tyburn. So great is the present outcry against this people (the Jews), that it is thought they will be wholly extirpated from these kingdoms, by an act, at the ensuing meeting of parliament.

1772, January 3.—Mr Creighton told a curious anecdote the other day, at the East India House, when inveighing against the malpractices of stock-jobbing. During the infatuation that prevailed among all ranks of people respecting the South Sea Scheme, in 1720, a nobleman called one morning at a banker's in Lombard Street, and pulling out a bank-bill of one thousand pounds, told him that it was at his service, if he would answer him, in one word, one question, assuring him, at the same time, that the question would not affect his honour. The banker agreeing to the proposal, the nobleman then asked him: 'Did Sir John Blount buy or sell to day?'

'Bought,' answered the other.

'Then there,' said the peer, 'is your thousand pounds; and buy for me twenty thousand pounds between this and night.'

January 8.—The great ball at St Paul's tolled this morning, for the death of the Princess Dowager of Wales (mother of George III.).

January 22.—Died in Emanuel Hospital, Mrs Wyndymore, cousin of Mary, queen of William III. as well as of Queen Anne. Strange revolution of fortune! that the cousin of two queens should, for fifty years, be supported by charity!

January 31.—Died Henry Cromwell, Esq. great-grandson of Oliver Cromwell, of illustrious memory.

April 28.—Died, at Mile End, the goat which had been twice round the world; first in the *Dolphin*, Captain Wallis, then in the *Endeavour*, Captain Cook. She was shortly to have been removed to Greenwich Hospital, to have spent the remainder of her days under the protection of those worthy veterans who there enjoy an honourable retirement. She wore on her neck a splendid collar, on which was engraved a Latin distich, said to have been written by the ingenious and learned Dr Samuel Johnson.

May 19.—Dreadful fire at Amsterdam. The great theatre of this city has been burned to the ground, and thirty-one persons have perished in the conflagration. The fate of Mr Jacob de Neufville van Lennep and his lady is particularly deplored. In the rush which every one made to escape from the flames, Mr Lennep lost hold of his wife, and was carried forward, in spite of himself, out of the reach of danger. So great, however, was his affection for his wife, that he was heard to declare that unless she too were rescued, he must perish with her. Accordingly, he forced his way back into the house, offering aloud fifty thousand crowns to any one who would assist in saving her; but vain were all his efforts. Next morning, the wife and husband were dug from the ruins, locked in each other's arms!

May 23.—Died of a fall from his horse, Lord William Manners, brother to the Duke of Rutland. He has left an immense fortune—at least £400,000, exclusive of a family estate, all of which he is supposed to have acquired by play.

June 24.—Yesterday, a young woman was interred in Chiswick Church, *who died for love*; an extraordinary instance in these times, which are not remarkable for so much fidelity of attachment. Her pall was supported by six young damsels, and the corpse attended to the grave by fourteen mourners, together with many spectators, who seemed greatly affected by the fate of the unfortunate deceased.

Dec. 10.—Died at Whittingham, in East Lothian, Barbara Wilson, a virtuous old maid, aged one hundred and twenty, hen-wife to Alexander Hay, Esq. of Drummelzier. She had spent the most of her life as a servant in that family, and was so remarkable a genealogist of her feathered flock, as to be able to reckon to the tenth generation. In testimony of her uncommon merit, her corpse was conveyed to the common burial-place there by a large assembly of females uniformly dressed, suitable to the occasion, and interred with the greatest decency. No male person was permitted to accompany the funeral.

1773, August.—Married at Kirkcudbright, the Rev. John Gillespie, minister of Kells, to Lady Bograw, with a handsome fortune, and 'entirely suitable to the character of a clergyman.'

August 28.—Died at Tain, in Ross-shire, at the very advanced age of one hundred and three years, Mrs Mary Duff, spouse to a respectable burgher in that town. She was a decent, well-behaved, honest woman, and retained her senses to the last. His present reigning majesty is the sixth king reigning on the throne since she was born.

1774, April 4.—Died, Dr Oliver Goldsmith. *Deserted is the Village*; the *Traveller* hath laid him down to rest; the *Good-natured Man* is no more; he *Stoops but to Conquer*; the *Picar* hath performed his sad office; it is a mournful lesson, from which the *Hermit* may essay to meet the dread tyrant with more than Roman fortitude.

May.—Died, at Hagley, in Worcestershire, my old acquaintance John Tice. He had reached the extraordinary age of one hundred and twenty-five. His life was one of ease and comfort. The greatest misfortune (as he lately declared) which had ever befallen him was the death of his only friend, Lord Lyttleton. He took that loss so much to heart, that he never left his room until after his death.

WHERE?

A MINUTE gone. She lingered here, and then
Passed, with face backward turned, through yonder
door;

The free fold of her garments' damask grain
Fashioned a hieroglyph upon the floor,
Then straightened, as it reached the corridor.

Down the long passages, I heard her feet
Moving—a crepitating music slow—
And next her voice, an echo exquisite,
But modulated in its tender flow—
A harp through which the evening breezes blow.

Upon the table, there were books and flowers,
And Indian trifles; a Mahratta blade
Whose ivory hilt sustained a cirque of towers,
Wedded by the inexplicable braid
On Vishnu's shrine at harvest full moon laid.

The curtains shook; a scarlet glamour crossed
The stained wood and the white walls of the room—
Wavering, retreated, trembled, and was lost
Between the statuo's plinth, the console's gloom,
And yon tall urn of yellow blossomed broom.

I see her face look backward at me yet,
Just as she glided by the cypress chair;
Her happy eyes with happy tears are wet,
And, over bust and shoulders, cool and fair,
Stream the black coils of her abundant hair.

In what far past—in what abysm of time
Have I beheld that self-same look before?
There was no difference of hour or clime:
A garment made a figure on a floor,
Which straightened sweeping towards a corridor.

Rare trifles were around me, curtains blew,
And worked their restless phantasms on a ceil;
A sidelong bird across a casement flew,
Upon the table glittered graven steel,
And a low voice thrilled me with soft appeal.

All things were there, as all things are, to-day,
But where? I half remember, as a dream,
Such accidents, in epochs, long grown gray—
Such glory, but with ever-narrowing beam,
From which I'm severed by some shoreless stream.

Have I forgotten—is this flash of light,
Which makes the brain and pulse together start,
Some ray reflected from the infinite
Worlds, where I mayhap have left a heart—
The Infinite of which I am a part?

Who shall unriddle it? Return, sweet wife,
And with thy presence sanctify this pain;
Cling to my side, O faithful help of life!
Lest, in the hour when night is on the wane,
The destinies divide us two again.

*On Saturday, February 7, 1874, will be commenced
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THE DOOMED SHIP.

'SEEN a deal of rough weather in my time, sir? Yes, that I have; what with being east away twice, and burnt out off the Cape, I've had my share of it, sir. But there's worse than either storm or fire, ay, a deal worse.'

'What's that?' I asked of my bronzed, weather-beaten friend, a boatman at a favourite bathing-place.

'Being speculated on, sir! That's the word for it. It's a long one; but it's the right word for all that; sold for money, as if we were sheep or oxen.' Something moved the old man deeply as he uttered the last few words; his bony fist came down on the thwart of the boat as if it would smash the frail timbers.

'You may well look surprised, sir,' added he, recovering his usual placid look; 'I ain't myself when I talk of it. I feel a kind of murderous hatred of the villains when it all comes afore my mind. Maybe you'd like to hear the yarn, sir?'

'Very much indeed,' I replied, my curiosity excited by the vehemence of the old tar.

Having turned his quid of tobacco over in his capacious mouth, he began as follows:

'It's some years ago now since I was looking out for a ship up in the north; freights were very low, and shipping business dull, so that there was a number of hands about the port, and do what I might, I could not get a berth. My money was pretty nigh all gone, for I'd been ashore a month, and Jack and his money soon part, what with land-sharks of one sort and another, male and female—I don't know which is the worse of the two—anyhow, I must go to sea again, or sell my kit, and tramp off to London. Well, I was down upon my luck in this way, when one morning, as I was sauntering down to the docks, to have a look round the shipping, a man, who had been walking behind me for some little time, edged up alongside.

'Looking out for a ship, my lad?' says he, in a bluff, hearty kind of way.

'Yes, sir,' says I.

'I thought you might be!' says he, casting a side-glance at me with his small gray eyes.

'Yes, I am,' says I.

'Well, I can put you in the way of a nice snug berth, my lad. I suppose you wouldn't object to a trip to South America?'

'It didn't much matter to me where I was bound, but somehow the fellow's figurehead didn't please me, so I answered rather short: "If you mean the *James Wilson*, she's filled up."

'You're wrong, my lad: the vessel I am speaking of is at Cardiff; and if you'd like a berth in her, perhaps I could manage it. However, there's no harm done; you don't seem to care about it, so there's an end of it.' So saying, he wished me good-morning, and dropped astern.

'Well, thinks I to myself, if this chap meant mischief, he would not be so ready to sheer off: one place is as good as another to me, and maybe I'm losing a chance that won't come again in a hurry. So I turned round as he was crossing the road, and calls out to him: "Hollo there, mister!"

'The man took no notice; so I ran after him till I came alongside.

'Well, my lad,' says he sharply, 'what's in the wind?'

'I was thinking about what you said just now; and if so be all's square'—

'All square! What do you mean? Confound it, man, do you take me for a crimp?' says he.

'No, sir,' says I, taken quite aback.

'Well, then, what do you mean by all square? Come, out with it! I've no time to waste with you. There's plenty of hands up yonder that will jump at such an offer.'

'Well, sir,' says I, recovering myself a bit. 'What's the name of the craft?'

'The *Maid of Orleans*. But what does it matter to you? It ain't all square, you know!'

'So saying, he made as if he'd sheer off, and I wish I'd let him go! But I felt vexed with myself for having doubted the man; my money would not last much longer; I was tired of a shore-life, and what a fool I must be, I thought, to throw away such a berth as he had offered.

"Come, sir," says I, following him up, "you needn't take offence at what I said. If you want a man, I'm willing."

"He did not seem best pleased, though, for he stood hesitating a minute before he answered. However, at length he says: "You'll have to go down by to-night's train. Perhaps your kit isn't ready?"

"Never fear, sir; it doesn't matter to me whether I start to-night or wait a week."

"Well and good. Then you'd better be off, and get your kit in order, and I'll meet you at the station at six o'clock. Mind you're there sharp!"

"Never fear, sir," says I; and so we parted.

"Well, sir, somehow or other, though the fellow was civil enough, I didn't feel altogether easy in my mind; but there was nothing left for it now but to go through with it; so I packed up my kit, bought a few odds and ends, and, towards dusk, made my way down to the station. There was an hour to spare before the train started; so I crossed the road to a public-house, to have a glass of grog, and sat myself down in a snug corner, whilst I sipped my rum-and-water. The room was partitioned off with bulkheads, and there was not a soul there when I entered. By-and-by two men came in, and sat themselves down in the next partition to mine, and I heard them talking together for some time without taking any particular notice. Presently, I thought I heard the name of the craft I'd shipped in, *Maid of Orleans*; and I pricked up my ears, you may be sure. I'd kept so quiet, that the fellows, I suppose, fancied they had the room to themselves.

"Bless your soul, man," says one of them, "it's a safe venture; never fear. Eight thousand pounds; that's the amount!"

"You're a smart fellow, and no mistake. Poor beggars!"

"Hold your tongue! I hate such cant. Who goes halves, eh! tell me that?"

"Well, don't fire up so, man; surely there's no harm in pitying them, if we are obliged to give them a dose of salt-water. Ha, ha!"

"That's talking like a man of sense. Eight thousand pounds clear profit! I tell you, Harry, it's as safe as the Bank of England. She'll never do it!"

"Light airs and calms, you know Johnny, eh! How about our venture, then?"

"Confound it, man, you're a regular kill-joy. A capful of wind is more than enough! She's like a sieve; once out to sea, she'll sop up water like a sponge."

"Suppose they take to the boats; what then?"

"Well, what if they do? They weren't built yesterday. The old *Reindeer's* children are as old as herself, ay, and as rotten!"

"He laughed a low mocking laugh, as he spoke, that sent a chill through my very marrow. I had heard of ships being sent to sea to be lost; but hitherto it had been my good luck to sail in first-class craft, and I used to put down such tales as forecastle yarns, invented by Jack out of spite to his owners. I was off the scent, however, and must have been mistaken in my fancy that I had heard them mention the *Maid of Orleans*, though I had some dim notion that I ought to collar the two ruffians and call the police; but then, perhaps, I had not understood the nature of the business, though it seemed plain enough too; and whilst I was debating

in my mind how to act, the fellows got up, and walked out of the place. I started up, so as to get a look at them; but it was too dark to make them out; so I went back to finish my grog, and to turn over in my mind what I'd heard. One thing was clear enough, and that was, that the doomed ship was the *Reindeer*; and a thought struck me that I might get something about her out of the *Shipping Gazette*. There she was, sure enough; a large clipper ship, advertised to sail in a week's time, class A1 at Lloyd's, owners Huidley & Company. I'm rather out of my reckoning here, says I to myself. That's a firm that never sent an unseaworthy ship to sea, and never will. Maybe, after all, those fellows were making game of me, saw poor Jack sitting there, and took a rise out of him. The clock struck the quarter, so I paid my score, and made all sail for the station. The man was there, looking so cheery and jolly that I scarcely knew him again.

"I was afraid you were going to give me the slip, my hearty," says he, laughing. "Here's your ticket. I'm sorry I can't go with you; but I've telegraphed for some one to meet you at the station, so you'll be well looked after!"

"I liked his jokes less than his sneers, so I didn't say anything, but bundled into the train."

"Good-bye, my hearty," says he, shaking me by the hand. "A pleasant voyage, and a quick return!"

"If ever I took a dislike against any one, I did then. The man's face haunted me long after the train had left the station; but being given to brooding, and having no cause to doubt his good faith, I got rid of his evil eyes, and lay back dreaming of a certain brown-eyed Polly who had promised to wait for poor Jack Robins till something turned up."

"Arrived at Cardiff, I found the mate on the look-out for me; and after signing articles, we went aboard the *Maid of Orleans*. The vessel was lying in the harbour with the blue-peter flying, and everything ready for sea. She was a long low craft, deep in the water—rather too deep, to please my fancy—fresh painted, and looking fine enough; masts and spars a trifle heavy; but, on the whole, I could find nothing particular to find fault with about her. As we pulled alongside, I noticed a woman on the poop. Hearing the sound of oars, she looked over the side, and I thought I'd never seen a sweeter face in my life."

"Old man got his wife aboard?" says I to the mate.

"Yes, and she's a regular good un!" says he. "You'll find yourself as comfortable aboard as if you was passenger in a liner."

"The skipper was coming up from the cuddy as we got on deck—a fine sailor-like young fellow, about thirty years of age, with an affable, pleasant way with him, that took my fancy."

"I hope you'll be comfortable aboard, my man," says he: "live and let live, that's my motto. You do your duty by me, and never fear but that I'll do mine by you."

"All right, sir," says I, touching my cap; and then I went forward and made acquaintance with my shipmates. Well, sir, to make a long story short, we got under weigh that afternoon, and stood out to sea, working down Channel with a light south-west breeze. The crew consisted of the captain, chief and second mates, boatswain, and fourteen men and a boy; captain's wife, cook, and steward: twenty-two all told; and things went on smoothly enough for some days after we sailed. My mess-

mates told me that this was the skipper's first voyage as master, and that he had been married about three weeks; and a happier couple there couldn't be anywhere. The young girl—for she was but a child after all—used to come on deck of a morning often when I was at the wheel; and she had always a kind word and a smile, that lighted up her pretty face, for the hands. She was as full of fun and frolic as a kitten, it being, I suppose, such a new kind of life to her; always joking and teasing the skipper, and plaguing him out of his life, what with saying she must try and be a sailor, and learn to knot, and splice, and steer, and handling the marline-spike and a bit of rope, daubing her pretty fingers with tar, running to the taffrail to look at the fish, or hoisting signals to passing vessels, using the wrong flags, and laughing merrily when the old man would try and be dignified. But 'twas no manner of use; her saucy laugh, rippling out like the little waves breaking against the ship's side, would change his frown into a smile in spite of himself; and often he'd cast a sheep's-eye at me, as much as to say: "You see, Robins! What can a fellow do with a craft like this in tow!"

'Sometimes she'd declare she must learn to steer, and come and put her little white hands on the spokes of the wheel, making-believe that she was watching the compass in the binnacle, whilst I was afraid of crushing her tiny fingers with my great knotty fists; and so the ship would come up in the wind, setting all the sails a-shaking, and then she'd clap her hands together, and call Harry, that was her husband, to see the mischief she'd done, her blue eyes kindling with delight, and her long golden hair floating over her shoulders like a mermaid's. I believe I was a bit of a favourite with her, as I always took care to keep myself clean and tidy, and to have a civil tongue in my head. There was something so innocent and winning about the girl, too, always ready to do a good turn, or to put in a kind word for any one, that we got to look upon her as a sort of angel or fairy. Anyhow, this much I'll say—I've sailed in scores of ships in my time, but I never heard less swearing on board any ship before or since than aboard of the *Maid of Orleans*. Well, sir, we'd been out about three weeks, the weather fine, with light breezes; and though we pumped rather more water out of the ship than we liked to see, there was nothing particular to growl about. I was so comfortable, and things went on so smoothly, that I'd well nigh forgotten all about the talk I'd overheard at the public-house, when one evening it all came back upon me on a sudden. For the last few hours the clouds had been gathering heavy from the northward; the wind shifted and jibed round; the skipper looked anxious, and I heard him tell the mate that the barometer was falling; and that we should have dirty weather before night. The watch were employed in odd jobs about the decks; and being in want of a coil of spun yarn, the boatswain sent me down into the storeroom to fetch it. The place was pitch dark, so I was obliged to take a lantern with me; and after groping about for some time, I found what I was in search of, close to the foremast, that ran through the storeroom. I was picking it up, when the light of the lantern fell upon some letters roughly cut into the mast, as if some idle young scamp had amused himself by carving his name with his jack-knife. Thinks I to

myself, let's see what mark the fellow has left. I raised the lantern, and as I made out the letters, a shiver ran through my very bones. There, as sure as death itself was the word *Reindeer* cut out clear and distinct upon the timber! You could have knocked me down with a feather; my knees trembled under me; a sort of dumbness came over my mind as I read again and again, scarce knowing what I did, that fatal word. The horrible talk I had overheard in the public-house seemed diined into my ears, mingled with the hoarse rush of the mocking waters, that seethed and foamed round the ship, as if reminding me that they were only biding their time to swallow us up in a living tomb. As I sat, dazed and frightened—it was the wickedness that frightened me, more than all the rest—on a coil of hawser, with a sort of horror in my heart, I heard the boatswain's voice shouting for the hands to shorten sail, and I sprang up the ladder to the deck. There was no time to be lost; a squall had struck us, the topsail halyards had been let go by the run, the sails were flapping about like thunder, and all hands shortening sail for dear life.

'We soon got the ship under double-reefed topsails, with a stiff gale blowing, the sky black and ugly, and the sea getting up, promising tough work before the night was out; but if it hadn't been for what I'd seen below, the gale might have blowed itself blue in the face without my troubling myself about it. Well, as the dog-watch from six to eight was well nigh over, I thought I wouldn't say anything to the skipper afore morning; but somehow my mind couldn't rest easy; it was no use frightening my shipmates; so, after a deal of tacking about in my mind, I determined to make a clean breast of it; for, thinks I, if he knows anything, there's no harm done; and if he doesn't, he'll be warned in time. Well, sir, I hung about the quarter-deck waiting till the skipper came below, and then I sent the steward in to say I wanted to speak a word with him.

"Well, my man," says he, "what do you want?" "Excuse me, sir," I says, "but I've got a queer yarn to tell you." So I up and told him from beginning to end. As I finished, his face was ghastly pale; his eyes wandered to the door of the cabin, where his beautiful young wife was lying, and his hands were clenched convulsively together. He didn't utter a sound, but seemed as if he was awaking out of a dream, putting things together bit by bit, till it was all clear to him as the noon-day sun. Presently, he lifted up his eyes, and clasped his hands, saying: "O God, help my poor wife!" and though he was a strong, hearty young fellow, there was a tear trickling down his cheek as if he'd been a woman. I don't think he was conscious of my presence just then; the shock had dazed him, like; he knew better than I thought how he'd been caught in a trap; how he'd been betrayed by a villain, a false, black-hearted villain; and the hopelessness of escape paralysed him. For my part, I'd expected nothing of this kind; I was not behind the scenes so much as he; so, though I'd felt it my duty to make a report, yet I hoped the skipper would only laugh at me, and call me a fool for my pains. Leastways, I'd said to myself, most likely, after all, he'll be able to explain the affair, and set my mind easy. When I saw him like this, my heart failed me. I had a poor girl, too, that was as

precious to me as his wife to him. So I says : "I suppose there's no doubt, sir, of this ship being the old *Reindeer*?"

"He looked up at me with such a face of horror and despair as I hope never to see again on mortal man. It moved me so, rough fellow though I was, and not much given to feeling, that I could have cried like a child. It was his wife, his bride, the cheery, loving, laughing girl yonder, that was tearing his heart, to think he had dragged her to a floating tomb, and become a murderer, like, of the creature he'd have died for!

"It is true, Robins! Heaven have mercy upon us! My wife! my poor wife!"

"Just then, the door of the cabin opened, and the beautiful face of his wife, with a bonny smile lighting on it up, peeped into the cuddy (I think she had rather gloried in the noise and confusion of the squall), thinking her husband was alone, no doubt, for her hair was falling loosely over her shoulders, and she was partly undressed.

"Harry, dear," she says in a cheerful voice, for his back was toward her, and I was standing well back in the shade, "when are you coming?"

"Her voice seemed to electrify the skipper; his face became livid with passion; but he answered quietly enough: "I am engaged for a few minutes, Lillie; I will be with you presently."

"When she was gone, the skipper turned upon me almost fiercely.

"I am betrayed, Robins, ruined, ay, murdered! But woe to the man who has done it! The vengeance of Heaven will light upon him, and blight him and his! Don't mention this affair to a soul; it can do no good. Poor fellows, it is no fault of mine. It will only unman them, and we must do what we can to save ourselves, in spite of these villains. Then let them look out!" There was a gleam in his eye as he said this that meant mischief, though he was as quiet and good-natured a man as ever I sailed with. "Send the carpenter to me; and not a word, on your life."

"I left the cuddy with a dark fear in my heart that I had never known before; our doom was sealed, sure enough, thought I; a mere question of time; a few hours more, perhaps, and these fiends would clutch the blood-money. There was murder, I'm afraid, in more than one heart that night on board of the *Maid of Orleans*. "Man the pumps!" was the first cry I heard when I got on deck, and I shuddered from head to foot.

"There's a deal of water in her," the boatswain muttered as I passed him on my way to deliver the message to the carpenter.

"It was my middle watch, that is, from twelve to four, so I turned into my bunk pretty well knocked up with the work of the day, but for the life of me I couldn't get a wink of sleep. The skipper haunted me with his wild despairing face, and seemed to reproach me with not having spoken before; and then the soft loving eyes of his wife pleading for mercy, poor young thing, ay, there they were, once so bright and merry, pleading with the villains who had betrayed her husband, and sent them both to sea in a living tomb! Then I thought of Polly, and wondered what she was doing, and whether she was saying a prayer for poor Jack Robins. I dozed off at last, but was soon roused by a man coming into the fore-castle and grumbling to a chum of his.

"They say she's sprung a leak, Jim. It'll be all hands in a few minutes."

"How's the wind?" growled the other, an old sea-dog that had weathered a hundred storms.

"Freshening fast. The old man's been on deck all the watch."

"Then the man, having lighted his pipe, sneaked out again, whilst old Jones turned over, to make the best use of his time.

"Eight bells struck at last, and as it was my time at the wheel, I turned out smart. The vessel was labouring heavily in an ugly sea, under close-reefed topsails, and the wind whistled through the rigging like the hiss of an angry fiend. The dull jerking sound of the pumps, at which four of the watch were working, told its own tale; and as I reached the poop, the carpenter came up from below with a face as white as a ghost. He went aft to the skipper, and I guessed pretty well what sort of a report he had to make.

"The ship, too deeply laden, was straining and groaning in the waters like a wearied horse, each wave that broke against her sending a quiver through her frame, opening up the weak spots in her hull, that let the cruel water in at each fresh blow. It was an awful feeling that stole over me just then. If she had sprung a leak in the ordinary course of things, I should have taken as a mishap all she might meet with, and been the first to cheer up, and run the risk of life with a light heart; but to know for certain that we were doomed beforehand, that we were the victims of a plot, our lives sacrificed for profit, our blood held of no account by a set of inhuman monsters—this cut to my very soul, raising a storm of savage wrath within me such as I never felt before or since.

"Pump, poor wretches!" I exclaimed to myself; "ay, pump your arms off; but it's no use! a steam-engine couldn't save us!"

"A sail on the lee-bow."

"The voice came like an angel's through the roar of the elements. The boy, a smart, chubby-faced lad, who was a general favourite on board, poor fellow! had been sent aloft to secure the topgallant-sail, that was blowing itself loose from the gaskets, and his cry sent a thrill of hope through my heart.

"Ay, ay!" shouted the skipper; "weather main brace. Keep her away a couple of points, Robins."

"There was a terrible excitement in the skipper's eye as he spoke to me, and a hard ring in his voice, that told its own tale.

"Jump aloft there, Mr Short, and see what you can make of her!" says he to the mate; then turning again to me, he added: "It's our only chance, Robins; the carpenter reports four feet of water in her. Thank Heaven for this mercy!"

"A large vessel under double-reefed topsails, close-hauled," reported the mate as he came down from aloft, for the clouds had broken away from the moon just then, and the wind slackened a bit.

"Get the rockets up, Mr Short, and the blue-lights ready."

"Ay, ay, sir!" replied Short, as good a seaman as ever trod a plank.

"Meantime, with the yards squared, and a reef shaken out of the topsails, the *Maid* was rushing over the waters, as if anxious to give her doomed crew a chance of rescue, before the greedy ocean should swallow her in its huge maw; whilst, as she rose on the crests of the waves, I could distinguish

the dim outline of the strange ship about two points on the lee-bow. What a time that was! The watch labouring at the pumps, a sort of hush on the rest of the crew, who had remained on deck, as if aware that the doomed ship was running a race with time for dear life; the skipper with one hand on the taffrail, and a speaking-trumpet in the other, casting fearful glances over the side, as if measuring each dip of the unhappy vessel into the waters; and below, sleeping calmly, as if pillowed on her mother's breast, his beautiful wife, all unconscious that grim death was within a few feet of her innocent heart!

'You grow eloquent, old man,' I said, as the old sailor paused for a few moments as he thoughtfully refilled his pipe.

'Ay, sir; it gives a man tongue, when he's got to tell such a yarn as this; I can see it all now as I sit here.'

He remained reflectively puffing his tobacco for some minutes, then resumed his narrative.

'Well, as I was a-saying, sir, it was a time of terrible suspense. Presently, the carpenter crept up the poop-ladder again, and made a report to the skipper, and I heard him utter an exclamation of horror. Five feet of water in the hold!

'The moon was again hidden by black clouds; the gale blew with increased fury; the waves threw their foam high over the decks, as the ship broached to, yawing in the huge valley of waters that inclosed her in on every side; whilst afar burnt the light of the strange vessel upon which we were bearing down, more brightly in my eyes than ever did beacon.'

'Fire a rocket,' said the skipper; 'we will try them with that; maybe they'll heave to.'

'In a few seconds the meteor flashed up into the thick darkness, a dazzling cry for help.

'Even the men at the pumps rested for a moment to watch the effect of that messenger for rescue. We were now within half a knot of the stranger, who was hugging the wind, steering to the north'ard.

'Great Heaven!' I heard the skipper cry after the lapse of a few minutes, during which there was no reply, 'are they all asleep?'

'Another rocket was sent up, followed at intervals of a few minutes by others; but still the stranger held on her course, as if no doomed ship was imploring succour, no drowning wretches crying out for help!

'Burn a blue-light!' cried the skipper; and the burning mass lit up the deck, the spars, the rigging, the sails, the haggard faces of the crew, the terrible calm face of the skipper, and the terrified wondering face of the skipper's wife, who had come up from below, and was clinging to the companion ladder with a childlike astonishment, gazing round on the awesome scene.

'Steer right for her!' shouted the skipper to me; then, catching sight of his wife, he rushed to her side, and seizing her arm, led her on deck.

Another blue-light lit up the dismal night, and then one or two muskets were fired, for our only gun was stowed away below, and there was no time to get it on deck.

'Stand by the braces!' shouted the skipper, for the strange craft was now within a few cables' length.

'Get ready the cutter, Mr Short.' He had recovered his self-possession, which, at the sight of his

poor wife, seemed for a moment to have deserted him, and issued his orders in a calm clear voice, that gave fresh courage to the now frightened crew.

'It was an awful moment that! The ship was settling down; I felt certain of it, as she refused to answer her helm, but rose and sank lazily in the swelling waters, as if her strength was spent.

'Helm up!' cried the skipper, rushing aft. 'Run close under her stern!'

'Vain effort! In vain I brought the tiller hard over; she refused to answer her helm.

'She's sinking, sir,' I cried, as the frantic skipper pushed me aside, and grasped the wheel. 'It's too late!' He sprang forward like one possessed.

'Man the boat, men! Quick, for your lives!'

'Ay, sir.' There, almost within hail, was the stranger, standing steadily on, her great black hull visible to every eye as she rose and sank in the water like an automaton, her white sails gleaming against the dark sky, her light burning brightly at the mast-head—a ship manned by fiends! A superstitious dread crept over me as I watched her; perhaps the ghost of a doomed ship luring us on to hope, and mocking us as we in agony shrieked aloud for help!

'Even amid that horrible scene of danger and suspense, with death staring them in the face, the men waited patiently till the skipper's wife was placed securely in the boat; her white livid face touching the heart of the roughest amongst us, as we lifted her gently in as if she'd been our own flesh and blood, and wrapped around her all we could lay hands on, to make her comfortable; whilst nearer and nearer to the water's edge sank the doomed vessel, no longer rising to the heavy billows, but yielding, as if impotent, in the clutches of some sea-monster, dragging her down a thousand fathoms deep.

'The skipper was the last man to leave the ship, bearing in his arms a favourite little dog of his wife's, and as he sprang in, he shouted: "Give way for your lives, men!"

'Not a moment too soon, or we should have been swallowed up in the vortex of the sinking craft. I cast one glance round as we pulled away; the vessel reared herself up, as if for a final struggle, her sails flapping against the masts, as if affrighted; then she plunged down into the mighty deep.

'Well, sir, there we were adrift on the wide waste of waters, a strong gale blowing, a dark night, and a leaky boat. The words of our murderers came up clear and sharp in my ears as I lay crouched up close to the skipper and his wife, she clinging to him, and resting her golden hair on his breast. The children are no better than the mother; and, sure enough, already two of the hands were baling out the water that oozed in through the rotten sides of the cutter. Not a word had any one spoken since the foundering of the ship; a sort of horror had settled on all of us; for even the poor boy, a little wee chap on his first voyage, could see that 'twas no use trying to reach the strange craft, whose light now and again shone over the waters like a Will-o'-the-wisp, growing more and more dim as she crept on her course, leaving a boatload of Christian souls to perish almost within hail, without an effort to save them! The silence was broken on a sudden by a voice that sent a thrill through our very souls: "Harry, Harry! save me! Take me home, Harry, dear! O mother, mother! why don't you come?"

'Poor young thing! I suppose she was dazed with the awful suddenness of the thing; anyhow, I felt a kind of choking in my throat as I heard her pitiful cry.

"Hush, dear!" says the skipper softly, but his voice was husky and thick. "We shall soon be safe! Be quiet, darling, for Harry's sake!"

"His voice seemed to soothe her, for she remained silent for a few minutes, then she sprang up, and looked round. "Harry, Harry! where are we? Am I dreaming? Harry, quick; the water! Oh, take poor Lillie home!"

"Then she sank down again, and I could hear her sobbing like a child. I've been wrecked twice, and burnt out in the old *Roslyn Castle*, but I never saw such a crew as that same crew of the *Maid of Orleans*. Not a groan, not a whisper against the skipper; but each man seemed to make himself, as you may say, the guardian of that frail girl yonder, crying for her mother and her home."

The old man stopped, and leant his grizzled head on his great bouy hand, as if overcome by the rememory of that dreadful scene. Presently, as if ashamed of his emotion, he looked up, saying: "You must excuse an old salt, sir; but when I think of her bonny face, I'm regular thrown on my beam-ends, like. Well, sir, presently a kind of fearful whisper ran through us: "She's sinking!" It reached the ear of the skipper's wife as she nestled in his arms.

"Harry, Harry! Do you hear? Save me! Oh, I can't die! Harry, darling, do save poor little Lillie!"

"I would give my life for you, Lillie! I shall die with you," I heard him say.

"O Harry, my feet are so wet, so cold! Tell me I'm dreaming, Harry! O no! But will you die with poor Lillie? Kiss me, dearest!"

Those were the last words I heard: a shout of despair broke at length from the poor fellows as the boat settled down in the waters—a shout that rings in my ears as I tell of it; and the next moment we were striking out for dear life in the great ocean. The boat had drawn me down with her; and when I rose to the surface, my hand touched something hard, which I clutched with the gripe of death. I didn't hear a cry; I was alone, as far as I could judge, and you may be sure I clung fast to that bit of timber; for though I was a first-rate swimmer, I knew I must keep afloat, God willing, by the help of that oar! How I passed the next hour before daylight broke, I can't well describe. My mind wandered, I fancy, a bit, for old scenes and old familiar faces were pictured-like before me. One time I was in the old house at home, listening to my mother as she read a chapter out of the Bible, and I could hear every word she said clear and distinct, just as she'd sat there afore I went on my first voyage. Then I was standing with Polly hand in hand with the bit of ring we'd broken in halves, pledging our troth down yonder under the oak-tree at the farm. Then, again, I could see the skipper's wife with her golden hair streaming over the waters, cold and dead; but her face somehow like an angel's, for all it was so white and still; and all the while I was conscious that if I let go my hold of the oar that the great waves tried to dash from my grasp, it was all over with Jack Robins.

Well, sir, daylight broke at last; the sea had gone down a bit, and I strained my eyes in search

of a friendly sail. Sure enough, bearing down right upon me, was a small craft. I ain't a man, I'm sorry to say, much given to prayer, but at that moment I lifted my heart to Heaven to send that ship to me! On she came like a sea-bird bounding over the waves, every stitch of canvas spread to the breeze, for the storm was over, and only a heavy swell remained, as a witness of the evil work it had done. Once she yawed to starboard. What an awful moment that was; if she altered her course, I was lost! I could not shout, in my terror. But up; it was only the blundering fellow at the helm; and again she bore down as if she would cut me in two. She was within two cables' length, and I raised my voice, and shouted like mad. A fellow in a red cap ran forward, and looked over the bows. Again I hallooed; he saw me, and waved his hand. I was saved! What a prayer of gratitude I uttered from my very soul! On she came, as if the vessel herself longed to snatch poor Jack from a watery grave, till, running close down upon me, she hove to, and lowered a boat.

"Well, sir, the rest of my yarn is soon told. The vessel was a Spaniard, bound to Chili; and I was glad enough to lend a hand to the crew in exchange for a passage out. Well, sir, you may be sure I was anxious to get back to England, to bring the villains who, for the sake of the insurance money of eight thousand pounds, had doomed us all to go to the bottom, and who of course had got the cash. It would have been right for me to get them punished; but a good offer was made to me in a ship bound to Australia; so I thought I'd bide my time, for I couldn't afford to throw away a chance like that. When we reached Melbourne, the gold-fever was raging, and I made my way off to the diggings; and it was full six years afore I stepped ashore in the old country once more. I told my story to several influential gentlemen; but bless you, sir, they only shook their heads, and said it was a long time ago, that I'd no proofs to bring, and advised me to let the matter drop. But it's been on my mind this many a year; and now I hear there's a friend of poor Jack as has taken up his cause; and if you'd like to tell him this yarn of poor Jack Robins, why, you're welcome, sir."

SHAKESPEARE AND THE SUPERNATURAL.

THE Greek dramatists subordinated the action of all their pieces to an influence originating beyond the sphere of humanity, but invested with that grandeur and majesty which in human apprehension belong to the unknown. The northern nations deriving their religion from the East, drew likewise from the same source that superstition, which, after the introduction of Christianity, they shaped into the belief in witchcraft. It would be wronging Shakespeare to suspect him of sharing in such a belief; but, perceiving how widely it prevailed, he resolved to employ it for dramatic purposes. In his mind, with respect to *Macbeth*, the process appears to have been this: a council of intelligences in their nature evil, being held, it is in it determined to originate a series of calamitous events in the kingdom of Scotland. The plan of action is laid down, the instruments are chosen, the delusions are conceived and organised by which the disastrous process is to be completed. All this having been antecedently settled, Shakespeare's

genius accepting the decision of destiny, brings together the agents, natural and supernatural, and begins his drama. Every reader perceives that Macbeth is accosted by the witches on 'the blasted heath' in conformity with a scheme of action laid down elsewhere without his privity or the consent of his will.

When the supernatural is brought into collision with the natural, it does not follow that the latter must yield to the shock; the human mind, though weak if compared with the united forces of the invisible world, is not constrained of necessity to succumb to them, though the danger of such a result be imminent. The conflict is now about to take place: the powers of evil are represented by three bearded women; right and justice by two soldiers in the plenitude of manhood, but intoxicated with ambition by success. The witches behold their prey, and the art of Shakspeare begins at once to give evidence of its potency. On perceiving the strange objects before them, Banquo exclaims:

What are these,
So withered and so wild in their attire;
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on 't? Live you? or are you aught
That man may question? You seem to understand
me,
By each at once her choppy finger laying
Upon her skinny lips:—You should be women,
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
That you are so.

In order to take a firm hold on the mind of Macbeth, the witches dazzle him with a sample of their prophetic skill. Whence this knowledge of the future came to them, is another question, but they possessed it, and like the seers of old, subdued the existing by the unborn. What follows is well known: on being asked by Macbeth what they are, one hails him as thane of Glamis, a second as thane of Cawdor, and the third as climax lets him know that he shall 'be King hereafter.' There is here a masterly skill in not telling him too abruptly what is to be his high destiny.

In some old book of emblems, the idea of destiny is suggested by part of a chain composed of bright and huge links issuing from a black cloud, and after throwing a long sweep towards the earth, rising at the other end to the same cloud, and lost in it again. Within the embrace of this chain, Macbeth now chose to place himself, so that henceforward he can hardly be regarded as a voluntary agent. Once, indeed, at a future point in his career, it seems as if he might have slipped out of its grasp; but here at least he yields up unresistingly his whole soul to the fascination of a sceptre; and while he is under the influence of his waking dream, Banquo extorts from the weird sisters what they have to say of his own fortunes. After some sonorous salutations from the witches, in which Banquo is concerned, Macbeth, in a state of excitement and perplexity, beseeches them to stay and tell him more.

Mac. Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more.
By Sinel's death, I know I am thane of Glamis;
But how of Cawdor? the thane of Cawdor lives,
A prosperous gentleman; and, to be king,
Stands not within the prospect of belief,
No more than to be Cawdor. Say, from whence
You owe this strange intelligence? or why

Upon this blasted heath you stop our way
With such prophetic greeting?—Speak, I charge you.
[Witches vanish.]

Ban. The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them. Whither are they vanished?

Mac. Into the air: and what seemed corporal,
melted

As breath into the wind.—Would they had staid!

Ban. Were such things here as we do speak about?
Or have we eaten of the insane root
That takes the reason prisoner?

If intelligence be a necessary part of human nature, the passions which inhere in it, and the ideas and beliefs which it grasps, form also part of it, and must obviously be co-lasting with it. When congregated together in huge cities, men appear to have passed out of the domain of nature, and living in close proximity to each other, may almost be said to think in masses, and in this state encourage each other in the notion that they are stronger than their forefathers were of old, and can dispense with those secret helps to the understanding, which communion with nature in solitary places, in caves, in the recesses of mountains, or on the wild beach, seems to engender. Hence faith in several things formerly believed appears to die out; but only appears to do so, since a sudden change of circumstances, war, pestilence, eclipses, earthquakes, allying themselves with the shadow of death, bring back into most minds the beliefs of primitive humanity; and these beliefs, united and formed into a system, have subdued and kept in subjection the intelligence of the whole world, assuming different names in different ages, but in their essence and real character remaining always the same. If we push back our researches to the farthest horizon, as it were, of thought, we shall perceive, through the dimmest twilight, figures of magicians, necromancers, enchanters, the seers of visions, the dreamer of dreams, who, through various processes, engaged to unveil the future, and reveal to their contemporaries the events that should come after them.

In some parts of the East, these pretensions were regarded as so nearly bordering on criminality, as, in certain contingencies, to be punishable with death. In old Hellas, thought vindicated to itself a freer range, and there, accordingly, the offspring of superstition acquired its natural development. Man could not pretend to have the surface of the earth all to himself; beings of less tangible form, but still material, and often visible, inhabited this world with him, sometimes emerging from the infernal regions, from the seas, from rivers, or fountains, or trees; or even, apparently, from the air itself. All these beings had their duties and appointed places in the realm of nature, and were employed to direct, stimulate, enlighten, and sometimes to terrify, chastise, or punish human beings for their misdeeds.

In all this vast system of existences, we discover nothing exactly analogous to a witch. Alastor, Lamia, Empusa, the Destinies, the Erinyes, had all more or less reference to the chastisement of guilt, and had never, at least in remoter ages, the slightest power to injure the innocent. It was only after that period in the world's history in which superstition invented the Manichean system that a witch became possible, though, for several ages after, indeed, almost up to our own day, multitudes of harmless women, more especially

if poor and old, were burnt alive, or otherwise destroyed, to gratify the malignant stupidity of their fellow-creatures. The Greek tragedians brought supernatural beings on the stage, but under different conditions from those in which Shakspeare's witches present themselves. The Furies in *Æschylus* are females, old, hideous, repulsive, yet with an inherent sublimity, not merely because they are supposed to be instinct with deity, but because the mission assigned to them by Fate is to punish the most awful aberrations from the laws of Justice. Though terrible, therefore, in their nature, and no less terrible in their appearance, they irresistibly command reverence by the sacred duty with which they are invested. They first appear to this spectator asleep on benches in the dim interior of the great temple at Delphi, while Orestes, the victim they are commanded to pursue, clasps, in the habit of a suppliant, the image of the god, a situation from which he could not be dragged without impiety. To the Greek mind contemporary with *Æschylus*, the Fury suggested ideas and associations so deeply inwrought with terror and dread, that audiences experienced some difficulty in resisting the effects of this representation. The exhibition on the stage of these subterranean goddesses, clothed with right and justice, and commissioned to punish blood-guiltiness, necessarily inspired feelings far more powerful than the appearance of a few witches, grotesque in their aspect, and associated in the imagination with loathsome rites and murderous purposes. Shakspeare has nevertheless contrived to connect them in the tragedy of *Macbeth* with a strange interest, prevented from becoming absorbing by their ludicrous incantations, their obscene fancies, and grotesque wickedness. Whatever men believe, exists in their imagination; and in that sense, therefore, ghosts are real beings, in whatever way the idea of them originated. In fact, wherever there are men, there are ghosts, though the mode in which they associate themselves with the living depends on numerous variations in the forms of thought prevalent in different countries and stages of civilisation. Shakspeare as a poet beheld everything subjected to his genius, whether in the inner or in the outer world, to be made use of in his artistic creations according to the suggestions of his fancy or the decisions of his will. But the supernatural, wherever and by whomsoever employed, is difficult to be dealt with, because we are unacquainted with the laws which regulate its existence—if it exists—though we may, and ought to know the nature of the laws which govern it, if it be the offspring of our own inventions. Yet no amount of intellect seems adequate to impart to that which is created by fancy the consistency which is the attribute of natural existences. The ghost of Darius in *Æschylus*, when forced by magic to ascend from the nether world, falls into inconsistencies which we should scarcely have expected to find in the productions of so great an intellect. No nation has yet fabricated a settled and consistent system of belief respecting the condition of departed spirits, or the amount of their power and knowledge. *Æschylus*'s judgment was at fault on this subject. The account of a still older apparition is more distinct and vivid. When the enchantress of Endor calls up the manes of Samuel, the Hebrew king inquires in extreme terror what she beholds. 'I see,'

replies the enchantress, 'gods ascending out of the earth;' and among these was the figure of an old man covered with a mantle. Angry at being disturbed, the spirit inquires: 'Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?' and then proceeds to disclose, in menacing language, the fate of the guilty monarch. In this brief narrative there is no inconsistency, though there is one circumstance respecting which our curiosity would gladly be satisfied. Did the Hebrew people of that age believe, like the pagans, in a nether world, and regard it as the abode of certain gods, who emerged from their dark Plutonian mansions to accompany the prophet?

If Shakspeare had the apparition of Darius in his mind's eye, as seems probable, he has in some respects improved upon his original; nothing can be grander or more effective than the opening scenes in *Hamlet*. There is in most minds, perhaps in all, something of a belief in the doctrine, that the material world is belted round by another, peopled with spiritual, or, as Shakspeare would perhaps have called them, metaphysical, existences, which press upon us 'fools of nature,' and fill our minds with rapture or horror. Night, solitude, silence, broken at intervals by moaning of the wind, or splash of the ocean-surges, with nothing but the twinkle of stars to mitigate the darkness, are able to throw lonely watchers into a frame of thought favourable to superstitious influences. Thus we find Bernardo, Marcellus, and Horatio, in a bitterly cold night, on the platform before the castle at Elsinore, discussing the apparition of the royal ghost, Horatio doubting, and the other two avouching what they had twice seen. To mark the time, Bernardo says:

When yon same star, that's westward from the pole,
Had made his course to illumine that part of

heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one—

Mar. Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes again!

Ber. In the same figure, like the king that's dead.

Horatio's doubts being thus dispelled, he, as a scholar, is desired by the two soldiers to speak to the ghost, which, in spite of his fear and wonder, he does.

Hor. What art thou, that usurp'st this time of night,

Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometime march? By heaven, I charge thee,
speak!

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See! it stalks away.

Hor. Stay; speak; speak, I charge thee, speak!

From this and what follows, it is obvious that Shakspeare here intends to vouch for the reality of the ghost's appearance, though, as we shall elsewhere discover, he afterwards imperatively denies the reality of such apparitions. Here, however, the narrative is explicit, positive, and corroborated by the testimony of three witnesses. Horatio having been thus convinced, the dialogue enters upon a speculation as to what such an apparition boded to the state; from which it is made evident that they entertained no suspicion of what had taken place in the palace, by which the young lord

Hamlet, for whom they all cherish an attachment, has been defrauded of his right. While they are busied in this discussion, the spectre breaks in again upon their sight.

Hor. But, soft, behold! lo, where it comes again!
I'll cross it, though it blast me.—Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me:
If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
Speak to me:
If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,
O, speak!
Or, if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
Speak of it!—stay, and speak!—Stop it, Marcellus.
Mar. Shall I strike it with my partizan?
Hor. Do, if it will not stand.
Ber. 'Tis here.
Hor. 'Tis here.
Mar. 'Tis gone.

We do it wrong, being so majestical,
To offer it the show of violence;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

The tragedy of *Macbeth* has already survived the belief in witchcraft, though, so long as men have faith in the existence of their own souls, the notion will be more or less widely cherished, that what survives the grave may, under certain conditions, and to answer certain ends, become visible. The supernatural in *Hamlet* will consequently continue to find acceptance by mankind long after the superstition which forms an integral part of the basis of *Macbeth* shall have become effete. According to the direction in which speculation is at present advancing, some of us are likely soon to adopt the Indian notion, that by piety and philosophy, men have given themselves souls, and may yet augment the power of those souls indefinitely. Meanwhile, we are also drifting towards that Hellenic theory which teaches that the disembodied spirit passes necessarily into a form or vehicle, which, though subtle and shadowy, is still material, and may therefore at times be visible! Whatever view Shakspeare may have taken of the goal to which philosophy leads us, he took the fancies, beliefs, and superstitions of mankind as he found them, as materials to build up his plays. Hamlet is a man who has lost his way in a vast wilderness of thought; everything on the horizon of his observations perplexes him, his father's sudden death, his uncle's marriage with his mother, his own exclusion from the throne. Owing entirely to the inactivity of his character, which amounts to stupor, he looks around him in helpless indecision, persuaded he ought to act, but altogether uncertain how or what to do. Assuming that the spirits of the dead are acquainted, by unknown means, with what is going on in the spirits of the living, Shakspeare represents the soul of Hamlet's father as still, even amid the flames of purgatory, yearning with affection for his unhappy son. The poet himself felt no little perplexity how to bring about an interview between the living and the dead; the obvious course would have been to conduct the ghost into Hamlet's chamber, or to the scene of one of his solitary walks, where, out of sight and hearing of the world, they could commune together. But the exigencies of his art suggested a different course. He desired

to establish in the minds of the audience a conviction of the ghost's reality, though at the expense of its logical powers, and the supernatural scenes as we find them in the play are the result. While the Prince is in his worst state of bewilderment, the three ghost-seers present themselves before him. In the colloquy that follows, Hamlet, having alluded sarcastically to recent events, said he thought he saw his father, upon which Horatio inquires:

Where, my lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Hor. I saw him once; he was a goodly king.

Ham. Ho was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Ham. Saw! who?

Hor. My lord, the king your father.

Ham. The king my father!

Horatio then recapitulates the circumstances attending the ghost's appearance to him, upon which Hamlet expresses his resolution to join them in their watch about midnight. The suspicions he had previously entertained now crowd upon his mind in greater strength, for as his father's spirit is in arms, his belief and expectation are, that the foul practices of his mother and uncle are to be disclosed to him that night. All playgoers, as well as readers, are familiar with what immediately follows between the Danish Prince and his father's spirit, which, though, upon the whole, a fine example of dramatic art, is disfigured by some blemishes. The spirit having divulged to him the true state of things, his mother's debasement, his uncle's crimes, his own unjust exclusion from the throne, he believed, or did not believe the revelation. If he extended to it his faith, he should at the same time have cherished for the revealer both implicit trust and reverence; yet, when he is seeking to exact an oath of secrecy from his companions, and the ghost from beneath the earth seconds his desire, he addresses it in a jocular tone, as 'Truepenny,' 'Fellow in the cellarage,' 'Old mole,' and afterwards recovering a more proper tone of mind, exclaims:

Rest, rest, perturbed spirit.

For what reason are we to suppose that Hamlet shifted his ground, and addressed wild words to the spirit beneath the earth? Was it lest his intention to keep secret what had transpired should be frustrated by the ghost's imprudence? Unless this was his apprehension, we must tax him with levity; and if it was, he had already begun to be sceptical respecting the nature of the apparition. He afterwards, in order to justify his irresolution, sophisticates with himself, and tries to believe that the ghost might have been a devil; and now, while it was boring through the ground under his feet, to give proof of its anxiety for the success of his designs, he fears it might be wanting in policy—a weakness of thought, marking the obliquity of Hamlet's character. In his dialogue with the ghost, when the impression made by its disclosure of the murder was fresh upon him, he exclaims:

Haste me to know it; that I, with wings as swift
As meditation, or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

But when the full revelation has been made, he is stunned by the magnitude of the enterprise, and

immediately proceeds to invest his design with doubts and misgivings, which betray him into his habitual procrastination. Shakspeare found the difficulty of allying the natural with the supernatural all but insurmountable, and therefore, having made the ghost perform his part in a few brilliant scenes, he calls upon it no more, save once, during the remainder of the tragedy. We may imagine, indeed, that as often as it is permitted to revisit earth, it hovers about the last object of its solicitude; for in the scene between Hamlet and his mother, the ghost is present, and by an act of volition renders itself visible at the critical moment to withhold the Prince from becoming the rival of Alcmæon and Orestes. Here the ministry of the ghost ends; he has played out his part, and retires to sulphurous and tormenting flames, respecting the duration of which the son is doubtful.

In several other plays, the supernatural element appears, though not in a way to deserve much notice. In the *Tempest*, the mode of introducing it is mean and absurd, though the result be singularly poetical; in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the fairy creation is sportive and fanciful, though far too slight to command even the most transient belief; in *Julius Cæsar*, the incident of the spectre is much inferior to the account in Plutarch; and in *Antony and Cleopatra*, the miraculous music accompanying the departure of Hercules is clumsily introduced, and poorly described. When Shakspeare wrote the wretched scene at the close of *Cymbeline* in which he again attempts the supernatural, his genius had forsaken him. It is, therefore, only in *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* that we are to look for anything like grandeur in his dealings with the invisible world.

DEAR COAL.

THE dearth of coal has latterly been the great domestic grievance among high and low. Who is to blame for this state of things? asks the householder: collier, coal-owner, coal-dealer, failure of supply—who is the culprit?

Let us look first at the case of the collier, because by the public mind he is, rightly or wrongly, regarded as the chief offender. We know that the collier has, within the last two years, struck, and tenaciously 'hung on' for advance upon advance of wages. The first grand stand for higher pay was made by him, first, because he considered that the work he performed entitled him to it; and secondly, because he judged the time opportune for asking an advance, the coal-owners having largely advanced the price of coal in view of the suddenly increased demand in the iron-trade. His subsequent stands for advances were made on the principle, that having got something, there was no reason he should not have something more. Now, the idea upon which the collier first started, that the work he performed for society was not rewarded in proportion to its value to society, was in our opinion a right one. We may quote as many economic laws of demand and supply to the contrary as we like, but it is a fact that there may be classes of men inadequately paid, and unable from

external circumstances to obtain adequate payment, and therefore suffering wrong; and we believe that the collier was in such a position a few years ago. He does work to which a man must be born and bred. Unless habituated to pit-work from his earliest working age, a man could never have those muscles and sinews of steel which coal-getting requires. His labour is skilled: in addition to using the pick, he must know a hundred things connected with ventilation, with the nature of the mineral he works in, and the brittle roof over his head, which can only be acquired by long experience. How hard his labour is, may be judged from the fact that he is not good for much after he is forty. And to what risks is he exposed in his calling! A rope may break, and he be precipitated down a deep shaft; an engine-man may be careless, and wind him over the pulleys—equally certain death. The roof of his working-place may give way, and crush him down; an irruption of carbonic acid gas may overpower and lull him to death's sleep. We speak now only of accidents which happen frequently, almost daily, leaving out of the account the awful explosions, with the sad consequences of which the public mind is only too familiar.

Well, in payment for all these daily risks run, and for the certainty of premature decay, and unfitness for any other occupation, the collier, till within the last few years, received wages averaging about twenty-five shillings a week; a sum if anything lower, certainly not higher, than the wages received by artisans no more skilled, and with hardly any of the risks and bad results which accompany the collier's calling. We think, then, that we may, in fairness, allow the first point, that the collier was entitled to a little more consideration than he was receiving at society's hand, and to a little more remuneration. But having taken the first step, which only obtained for him what was in justice due, the collier bethought himself that the same process might be repeated with advantage. The coal-owner, his own prices advancing in the meantime, held out against advances of wages, but not so strongly as employers of other kinds of labour might have done. He knew that coals must be used, at almost any price, and that his profits in the long-run would not fall short; indeed, the higher the price of coal the higher the absolute profit, for however high the price, the seller will get his percentage of profit, and of course any given percentage on thirty shillings a ton, realises double the sum obtained by the same percentage on fifteen shillings a ton. Practically, the extra profits from increased prices have far more than counterbalanced the loss from shortened sale. Knowing these things, perhaps coal-owners looked with a less unfavourable eye upon demands for increased wages than, for instance, millowners would have done. We remember a good illustration of this. A year ago, a large coal-proprietor said in our presence in London: 'My acting partner in the north would not put coal up as I wished him, but I am glad to say the colliers have done it for him'—meaning, by striking for higher wages.

In this manner was the ball set rolling. The master-spirits of the trade foresaw that, practically, the higher the price of coal, the higher would be their profits; that the greater profit got upon each ton sold, would more than repay them for whatever loss of sale they might sustain. What they foresaw

has come to pass. It must be remembered, also, that the coal-trade offers unusual facilities for those engaged in it to have a good mutual understanding. They deal only in one article, an article easily priced, and, as regards the coal-owners, the capital required restricts their number. As to the agents, there are but a few agents in any ordinary town, through whom all the supply must come; what a temptation there is for these to combine, instead of competing! The same thing applies to London. Each railway entrepôt has its limited number of coal-wharfs, the occupiers of which have strong temptations to do the same thing. We remember the circumstance occurring some six months ago of the general manager of one large line being compelled to decline to supply a friend of his in London—an influential member of the House of Lords too—with a quantity of coal, for the combination of coal-dealers was so strong, that the pit-owner was dared at his peril to supply the coal. Here is the consumer in London, and here the producer in the north, but producer must not supply consumer, for a powerful band of coal-dealers step in and say: 'No! we hold the neck of the bottle, and shall let nothing be measured out except through our jugs!' Of course the coal-dealers have not been all black alike; many we know have been forced into the action by others; but these have been usually small men, whose course would not much affect the general issue.

Such have been the shares of the coal-owner and dealer in producing the present state of things. Now as to the failure of 'supply.' Unfortunately, the same word has been used to cover two very different things, which have thus got confused in the public mind. There is nature's supply, the stock in her underground warehouse; and there is also the marketable supply—the quantity of coal which can be raised in a given time with the existing appliances and capital employed. Supply of the latter kind has no doubt run short, and is to be remedied by more capital being employed in the getting; but failure in the first-mentioned supply is undoubtedly so remote that it has had practically no influence on the events of the past two years. The warning cry, raised by scientific men, has been skilfully used by those interested in the trade to their own advantage. The right use of the warning would have been to have brought about economy in the use of fuel, and also economy in the getting it. Old extravagant systems of working are still in use in many parts of the country, where as much coal is lost as is 'won,' and this should be put a stop to, if possible, by government interference. Of course there may come a time when nature's stock may approach exhaustion, and when prices may legitimately increase so much that it will pay us to import coal from other countries; but that time is certainly not yet, nor has it cast any shadow before it that has been practically felt.

'This is all very well,' says the British householder: of course I know that somebody's to blame, but it is, after all, small satisfaction to hear you meting out his proper share of blame to each culprit. What of the future? How is it all to end? The present bubble of high prices must sooner or later burst. It is our belief that a year or two will see coal at a price approximate at least to the price of two years ago. The collier has wrong more than justice from the coal-owner; the coal-owner at present is revenging himself by high

profits, and the coal-dealer is following suit; but by and by, by the embarkation of capital into coal-mining, which is even now rapidly going on, the market supply will be greatly increased, and with that a large diminution of prices must come. We know coal-owners who are at this moment getting forty and fifty per cent. return upon their capital: some, it is whispered, cent. per cent.—a return large enough to make the capitalist's mouth water, and to draw capital in any quantity. When capital has been embarked in sufficient quantities, down will come the coal-owner's profits; the owner, dragging down with him the dealer, will fall heavily upon the collier, who must be very firm indeed in his 'union' if he succeeds in retaining his present wages. However this may be, Paterfamilias will again be able to order his load of coal with something like equanimity, at something like old prices. The tide has already turned.

LADY LIVINGSTON'S LEGACY.

CHAPTER XL.—ESCAPE.

WHEN Dashwood left the pretty house by the sea-shore, where the tidings of Violet Maybrook's arrest had so suddenly reached him, he had need of all his self-command to preserve the steadiness of brain and the firmness of nerve which, as he instinctively felt, could alone save him at this pass. It was characteristic of the man that, after his brisk walk to the station, and although the glasses and decanters glittered temptingly on the refreshment counter, he abstained from the stimulants which habit had rendered all but indispensable to him. At another time, under any pressure of annoyance, he would have tossed off glass after glass of fiery brandy, and have felt the stronger and the cooler for the dose of burning alcohol. But there are two classes—not of drunkards, but of drinkers—the abject slaves of Circe's cup, who could not pass it by, were death the penalty; and the men to whom 'nips,' and 'pegs,' and 'pick-me-ups,' and all the modern euphemisms for drams, are as mother's milk, but who have sufficient moral fibre to grow wary in the hour of danger, and to eschew what our men-of-war's men once knew as 'Dutch courage,' at the very moment when the exhausted system most craves for its support.

'Not a drop, if I know it, until I am clear out of this!' muttered Sir Frederick, as, with his hat pulled over his eyes, he paced the platform, tramping to and fro until the train should arrive.

On his way up to London, he thought more deeply and persistently than was his wont, weighing the chances for and against his security. Time was to him life. He had sense enough to know that. But for all else, the tact which he displayed was merely that of the fox that hears the fences crack, and sees the gorse shiver as the mottled hounds burst in upon the covert, and steals away down-wind towards the distant earths, leaving younger members of the vulpine family to be torn by the white fangs. Violet, he thought, would not betray him. But then there was the promise of marriage, drawn up at her dictation, and which he had been fool enough to write and sign; and there was Aphy Larpent to figure in the witness-box, and there was the motive, palpable to all

Why had not that sallow little imp, Aphrodite, mentioned his name at the first? Had she done so, he would have been behind iron bars long before. She had no friendly feeling towards him, but she might have desired to extract more money from his fears. She had had hundreds from him already, and to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs might not appear to Aphy Larpent to be sound policy. But the absence of a reason for the astounding crime laid to Violet's charge was certain to set many a mind at work to solve the dark enigma, and who could profit by the boy's death but his uncle and successor? Then, too, the written promise—how lucky that it had not been instantly found—must sooner or later turn up, for that was not the kind of document which women destroy, and were it once produced in court, Aphrodite would have no further restraint upon her tongue, and could tell all she knew, and perhaps a little more.

But he could not fly, save on wings of gold. Once the fugitive from justice relied mainly on a fleet horse and a fair start. Let him gain some dozen leagues at the outset, and it would go hard if he could not cross the border, and be safe. But railways, newspapers, the wires of the telegraph, the camera of the photographer, the treaties that link the police of distant realms into a mutual assistance society for the confusion of evil-doers—these things throw fearfully heavy odds against the outlaw of modern days. Before he has covered a fifth of the distance that lies between him and his city of refuge, a legion of enemies, who now hear his name for the first time, prepare to beset his path. Every outlet is stopped, every movement anticipated; and wheresoever he may turn his hunted head, fresh bloodhounds follow hotly at his heels, fresh curiosity sets a snare for him, in every town and seaport, among lone moorland farms, in out-of-the-way villages, till the whole world seems in league to drag him back to punishment. Escape, then, even with the command of money, was very difficult, as he knew; but without it, impossible. Under the most favourable circumstances, every day, every hour, was of vital importance.

It was a relief to Dashwood that no one seemed to take any particular notice of him when he alighted at the terminus, and that he was allowed to step into a cab, and rattle off, unquestioned, and apparently unobserved. He had given, in a loud voice, the address of his club; but before he was half a mile from the station he called to the driver to set him down at the corner of Pitt Street. It was not until he had watched the man climb to his box, gather up his reins, and go clattering off, that he ventured to knock at the door of the Baron's place of business. It was, however, too late, and Baron Swartz was gone from the hive where he made his money.

Mention has been made of a certain suburban villa, palatial in size and splendour, where the Behemoth, out of office hours, dwelt, and where he dispensed, according to Dashwood's club friend, the major, a princely hospitality to a select few. Thither Sir Frederick now repaired, and after much importunity and some bribery, induced a servant to take in his card, with an urgent request for an interview pencilled upon it, to his master.

'I should think it as much as my place was worth, so strict as master is about being not at

home to gentlemen without an appointment,' said the footman, who relented, as he pocketed Dashwood's two sovereigns; 'but it so happens my time's up on Wednesday week, and as I am going into the publican line, I'm not anxious for a character. I'll do it, sir!'

And he went; the other liveried menials, whose tenure of service was too permanent to have permitted them to disobey orders, hanging about among the yellow marble pillars of the huge hall, and betting beer on and against the probabilities of the visitor's admission. But the beer had to be paid for by those who, on the strength of precedent, had been the most confident of success, for the answer was a request that Sir Frederick would 'step in' to a room adjoining the billiard-room and conservatory. 'The Baron would see him directly.' And the Baron was as good as his word.

When the Behemoth came into the room where Dashwood awaited his audience, he gave a little start at the sight of his visitor's face.

'Ah! it has come, then!' he said quickly, but in a low voice.

'I don't think I quite understand what you mean,' faltered out the baronet, in whose projects the design of reposing confidence in another person had certainly no share.

'Pardon me! you underrate your perspicacity—and mine,' rejoined the money-lender coolly: 'look in the glass there!'

The haggard, careworn countenance which Dashwood beheld in the mirror told tales. He scowled at the reflection of his own handsome, desperate face, and fixed his eyes, not on those of the Baron, but on the Baron's embroidered shirt-front and gleaming studs. 'You know of it, then?' he asked, in a low, hollow voice.

'Partly I know, and partly guess,' said the Behemoth, with his faultless, but painstaking, pronunciation of the English tongue, and his habitual smiling serenity of aspect: 'I make it my business to know, where my clients are concerned. Yes, I always expected this. It has come a little earlier than I had calculated, it is true, but then: social problems cannot be solved with mathematical closeness, after all. So you wish to leave London, then? Wish to travel? Your health demands it, does it not?'

Dashwood ground out an oath between his set teeth. 'I never know,' he said doggedly, 'when you speak seriously. Anyhow, you have guessed rightly. Will you help me—yes or no?'

'That is entirely a question of terms,' answered the Baron composedly: 'I will give you your answer as soon as you have replied to a question or two of mine. That the old lady's will was found, and that you went to the reading of it to-day, I am of course aware. A little bird whispered as much as that to me. You take nothing by it? No, no! And the pretty cousin—'

'The pretty cousin, as you call her, gets nothing either. All goes to that fairsoken nephew of the old woman's husband, Oswald Charlton,' interrupted Dashwood peevishly: 'not that it matters now.'

'So I conclude,' chimed in the Behemoth, with an amused interest. 'So so, that was the old lady's game; neat play, for the spindle side, but not without risk—well, well! Now, Sir Frederick,

what sum do you require? This is the wind-up, you know!

Dashwood made answer, sullenly, that he wanted a thousand pounds. It was little enough, Heaven knew, he said, wherewith to begin the world. It was little enough, as compared with the value to be ultimately realised from the fragments of his grandfather's inheritance. But he would take it, if he could have it at once, and be gone. The Baron laughed, not coarsely, but with a little silvery laugh that was apt to grate on the ears of those who, under peculiar circumstances, listened to it.

'You must not tell me,' he said, as he watched the baronet wincing under its influence, 'anything which I do not wish to know. You must not talk to me of beginning the world. Bah! You have been hard hit on some of your English racing engagements, and you would redeem your fortunes by a glorious *coup* at Homburg; is it not so? But you must be moderate. Considering the advances I have made, and the loss of interest, a thousand pounds would be preposterously too much, too much by the half. And another member of my profession would compel you to accept three hundred in cash, a hundred in wine, and a hundred in, say cigars. Again, the banks are closed for the day, and it might be inconvenient to an impatient man—you men of pleasure are always impatient—to await their re-opening to-morrow that he might cash a cheque. Now, if, to oblige you, I were to say five hundred pounds, what you call on the nail, *rubis sur ong*, as our French neighbours say, would you thank me for my good-nature?'

'Really, Baron Swartz'—began Dashwood, in an expostulatory tone; but the Behemoth cut him short.

'Really, my very dear Sir Frederick,' he said blandly, 'it is to take, or to leave. I have made a great concession already, in consenting to deviate from my rules, and to discuss business at my private residence, and in my hours of recreation. One word more, and you must call in Pitt Street, if you desire to come to terms.—What is it you mutter? That I take advantage of your necessities? Why, of course I do, my very good friend, of course I do. I have Bentham, and Smith, and all the authorities on my side. I am buying you, dear sir, in the cheapest market, consistent with buying you at all, and I will not deviate one fraction from my offer. There are very few men in London, let me tell you, who could pull so much out of a drawer at a moment's warning.'

And the result of the colloquy was that Dashwood, after half an hour's delay for the preparation of the needful bills of exchange and memoranda, passively signed his name where the Baron bade him, and thrust the notes and gold into an inner breast-pocket.

'You will write to me, may I venture to hope, from abroad?' said the smiling Behemoth, as he held out his ringed hand in sign of parting salutation: 'or, when you are back in town, call on me—always in Pitt Street. Nay, nay, you must not tell me that the time will be never. You will grow tired of the continent, and return. Of course you will. So now, adieu!'

It was evident, even to Dashwood, that Baron Swartz utterly declined to comprehend anything which it might be disagreeable to recapitulate in a witness-box. In spite of the very hard bargain

which had been driven with him, Dashwood left the Behemoth's stately portals with a lighter heart than that with which he had gone in. Half a loaf is proverbially better than a cupboard wholly bare, and small as was the sum in hand, it was larger than any of which he had lately enjoyed the use, and he hugged the thick roll of notes to his heart as he moved eastward. Life is strangely sweet, even to a tracked and branded felon. Dashwood was full of readiness and resource, now that it was a question of saving his skin. It had not always been so. But a danger from outside stimulates vitality, while distress within puts us out of love with life.

It was twilight, when a mounted patrol, slowly riding along the Great North Road, took some notice of a stalwart fellow with an ash-stick, and a red bundle, and a fell of dark unkempt hair hanging from beneath the slouched cap he wore, and a shabby suit of frayed velvet, trudging sturdily away from London. Stalwart tramps, usually with ash-sticks, and often bearing bundles red or blue, are such very common objects of the metropolitan highways, that this one would have attracted no observation, had it not been that the man, close shaved as he was, had somewhat of that nameless bearing which a soldier finds it hard to shake off. But a deserter would scarcely be seen leaving London; while if the solitary traveller had been lately an inmate of one of Her Majesty's prisons, it was clear that his hair would have been of shortened proportions. More likely was he a 'bonnet,' or confederate of some thimble-rig or wheel-of-fortune gang, bound to a distant race-meeting. 'After no good, I'll warrant him!' grumbled the policeman, and then forgot him, and went on.

Much the same face, but this time surmounted by short-cut hair of a tawny reddish tint, crisply curling beneath a billycock hat, belonged to a drover-like person, rough and taciturn, who smoked a blackened stump of a pipe while leaning against a tree just beyond the reach of the railway company's counterblast (rigidly enforced against third-class customers such as he), outside a station in the Potteries, while waiting for a train to convey him, at parliamentary pace and fare, to a cattle-market on the Welsh borders. It was a fair-haired, strong-limbed man, with somewhat of the sailor in his speech and garb, who trudged patiently along the Cornish roads, past brown moor and gaping mine-shaft, on his road to Falmouth. For well-made wigs are to be had in London back streets at short notice, and slopsellers in every large town have on hand an assortment of garments adapted for nearly every rank in life. The sleepy old Cornish sea-port is not the place that it was when fleets of outward-bound West India-men lay there, waiting for the tardy convoy that should guard them from French sea-wolves and Yankee privateersmen, or when shattered men-of-war, each with a leash of riddled prizes in tow, put in to refit before obeying the order to 'join, off Ushant.' But there is still traffic between the Spanish Main and the Antilles and Falmouth, and the good ship *Nancy Norris*, bound for Demerara, presently called at the far-western port for the tin that was to complete her cargo, and there took on board some steerage-passengers, miners, smiths, carpenters, such as are in demand in equatorial America, and among these the sailor-fellow with

the fair hair, to whose embarkation no impediment was offered, either by health officers or the local police. And thus Sir Frederick Dashwood left his native country—for ever.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS IN ITALY.

ANY one who has travelled, or resided for a short time, in Italy, will have remarked the generally cruel treatment of animals. Horses, asses, and mules in particular, are underfed, overtaxed, and often beaten unmercifully. English residents at Rome and Florence are amazed and shocked at these brutalities, which do not seem to receive any special notice from natives, even of good position and intelligence. Our distinguished countrywoman, the late Mrs Somerville, who spent her concluding years in Italy, made an effort to arouse public sympathy for animals; the cruelties, however, which pained her, still go on as usual. That the Italians, who have so much reason to boast of advancement in various branches of the fine arts, should be so insensible to the odious cruelties perpetrated on the poor dumb creatures placed at their mercy, is a little surprising and unaccountable; for they have not, as in Spain, been brutalised by the spectacle of bull-fights in a public arena.

In Italy, there is no distinct law to check and punish cruelties to animals. As a matter of private interest, all do as they like in regard to animal suffering. Professors in universities and other educational institutions may, in their prosecution of physiological science, pursue with perfect impunity the practice of vivisection on tender little dogs brought to them; tying down the wretched and helpless animals on tables, and proceeding, with appropriate instruments, to lay open part of their head, body, or limbs, in order to demonstrate to students some principle in the nervous or muscular economy—the piercing yells of the suffering victims being wholly unheeded. With our whole heart, we protest against and hold up to merited obloquy the insensate perpetrators of these shameful atrocities. The dominion imparted to man over the lower animals, gives no power to inflict pain, on pretence of serving the purposes of science; although some, we are sorry to say, think it does. Common humanity, to say nothing of Christian sentiment, revolts at mangling and martyring the meanest being in creation, least of all those gentle and affectionate domestic animals which confidently minister to our happiness.

We are led to make these remarks by observing that a special correspondent of *The Times* in Rome, has (December 24, 1873) drawn attention to the subject of cruelty to animals in Italy. He appears to have been prompted to do so, in reporting a remarkable lawsuit at Florence. It was briefly this. Two individuals, one of them Herr Schiff, Professor of Physiology, were indicted for a nuisance; the charge being that they disturbed the neighbourhood by the screams of the animals which they were constantly subjecting to vivisection. There was no complaint on the score of cruelty. That is not stated as having been a cause of any concern. The accusation simply was that the loud yells of the animals caused such discomfort, that the value of the adjoining property had deteriorated. As the counsel for the plaintiffs happened to be absent when the case came before the tribunal, no decision was arrived at, but a pledge was given

that the offence should not be repeated. There the matter meanwhile rests. All the learned vivisectionists need do is to remove to some solitary spot, where they may carry on their operations on living animals without creating a disturbance; or they may cut and mangle at pleasure in their present quarters by administering chloroform to their victims.

The account of the circumstance, as will have been observed by the columns of *The Times*, has roused a controversy regarding the character of Professor Schiff, and also the whole system of vivisection. Mr E. Roy Lankester, Lecturer at Oxford, defends Professor Schiff; speaks of 'his kind and gentle behaviour to the dogs which he keeps in the kennel of the Physiological Laboratory;' and mentions that he is by no means exceptional in his operations on animals, for vivisection is practised 'daily in several public institutions in London, in Edinburgh, in Cambridge, in Vienna, in Leipsic, in Würzburg.' Next, we have a point-blank contradiction as regards the value of vivisection for purposes of medical study, and something fresh is stated as to Schiff. We cannot be expected to go into all the particulars that are brought forward, but, in the cause of humanity, will confine ourselves to the following clear enunciations of Dr Arthur De Noo Walker:

'During a very long course of study at the Medical School at Florence I never saw or ever heard of Professor Schiff using chloroform. He used occasionally to make an aperture in the wind-pipe, in order to suspend the functions of the larynx, and thus prevent the exquisitely tortured animal from crying out for some pity. All the "eminent and qualified experimenters" I have studied under, both in France and in Italy, as far as I could judge, seemed to me hardened and heartless, and Professor Schiff was not an exception. The keeper of the Dogs' Home at Florence told me he had made over no less than 700 dogs to him, and I have no hesitation in saying, from past experience, that 680 of them were tortured for nothing. I say distinctly for nothing, because to dissect an animal alive simply to shew the students that which has already been proved and established over and over again, is inhuman, and utterly unworthy of one calling himself a scientific man. The professor in question does not practise as a physician; and whether quite justly or not, I don't pretend to say, but every time I pay my yearly visit to Florence two-thirds of the persons I speak with on this painful subject couple his name with execrations. Mr Lankester is, I suppose, under the impression that vivisection has or can relieve human suffering or prolong human life. It has never done either. Pathology has, but physiology never can and never has pointed out a single remedial agent for the relief of disease. It cannot do so; but, as Mr Macdovair observes, it has "been exceedingly mischievous in misleading men to false conclusions." Physiology aims at a knowledge of the functions of healthy states, but this knowledge never can suggest a remedial agent for diseased states. My knowledge of the actual condition of a sound piece of furniture, for example, will not suggest to me a remedy for another affected by "dry rot." Hence, it is seen that doctors differ very materially as to the necessity for vivisection, and that, in fact, it is sometimes practised as a kind of pastime.

The correspondent from Romo who narrated the case proceeds to say—and all possible honour to him for being so outspoken: 'In Italy, especially in the capital, cruelty to animals is practised to an extent unknown in any Christian country [Spain excepted]. The sights that one sees, and the sounds one hears, all along the main thoroughfares of Rome, are something so distressing and revolting, as greatly to counterbalance the pleasure foreign visitors find in their residence in this city. One would say that a carter in Rome considers savage yells, horrid oaths, and blows with the loaded butt-end of his whip, with a heavy cudgel, or with the handle of a pitch-fork, good substitutes for hay and corn to keep up the strength of his team, and to stimulate them to supernatural exertions. The whole way from the centre of the town to the railway station is a battle-field between man and beast from morning to night. It is not that all these drivers, carters, and conductors are deliberately inhuman, or dead to all sympathy with their four-footed servants: in many instances, they are to be seen with their shoulder to the wheel, tugging for very life, anxious to share the toil which, as they well perceive, too far exceeds the powers of their half-starved cattle. But why their cattle should be so wretchedly fed, and why the weight they are made to draw should be so iniquitously out of all proportion with their strength, is what never seems to strike either the men themselves or their employers, or the authorities whose business it ought to be to think for them. There is as much sheer stolidity as actual brutality, in the recklessness with which animals are here killed by over-work and ill-treatment. The man takes upon himself, and sets his cattle, an impossible task; he insists upon it with dogged obstinacy, frets against obstacles, and chafes at mishaps, his wrath rising with every slip and stumble of his jaded beast, till he works himself into a towering passion, when, utterly blind with rage, he flings himself upon the unoffending quadruped, and visits upon him the consequences of his own improvidence and unreason. Try a gentle remonstrance with your hackney coachman on behalf of his horse, and he will tell you that the butt-end of his whip does not hurt him; he is not a human being. Horse-flesh is, in his opinion, mere inanimate matter. But venture to scold the man as he deserves, and he will shew you the handle of his knife, and threaten to stab you; a threat which has often been held out to ladies who shewed more zeal than discretion in the cause of humanity. Liberty to use or abuse his beast as it best suits him, has always been granted to the subject in Papal Rome, and it is painful to see no improvement in that respect in the capital of the Italian kingdom. In a city where almost every third person one meets in the streets is a priest or monk, it seems incredible that religion should have achieved so little towards mitigating man's savagery. In a city where now sits a parliament, and where a complicated administration is at work, it appears hardly credible that the law should take no notice of ruffians and miscreants who starve, maul, maim, cripple, and scourge within an inch of its life, the defenceless creature over which the Maker can certainly have given man no rights without exacting the fulfilment of corresponding duties.'

The writer of this painful account of matters

adds, that the police, under a general law of public security, might be entitled to interfere in cases of obvious cruelty, but they do not give themselves the trouble; nor can we wonder at their indifference, seeing that they would have little or no support from public opinion. Any one attempting to invoke sympathy for horses, asses, and mules, would meet only with ridicule. Very discouraging this: yet at the risk of appearing quixotic, strangers, we are glad to learn, have been successful in promoting humane associations at Florence, Palermo, and several other places. It is to be hoped that the movement will reach Rome, where it may be the means of stimulating some desirable legislative enactment, to which associations may appeal. We commend the consideration of the subject to our various Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Judicious remonstrance from individuals noted for their philanthropic feelings, and also from associations in England, may possibly shame Italians into measures for meliorating, if not extinguishing, this great national infamy. W. C.

ODDS AND ENDS:

FROM DR ROBERT CHAMBERS'S SCRAP-BOOK.

FURNITURE BOOKS.—Often, people buy pictures that look well in gilded frames, but are not much worth, and only wanted to clothe the walls of a room. These, I am told, are called 'furniture pictures.' One does not so frequently hear of 'furniture books,' but such things exist, for all that. Many books are bought to lie scattered about drawing-rooms, merely because they are pretty in appearance, with fine bindings, fine engravings, and so forth; the sense or nonsense in the reading part being of no consequence. My old friend, Robert Ainslie (an early acquaintance of Burns), used to tell of an ancient bookbinder in Edinburgh, who had a very poor opinion of the interior of books. 'Onybody,' said he, 'can vrite a book; the bindin's the thing!' The idea of the binding being the thing to care about, is exemplified not only in fine table-books, but in works for the shelves. These are the genuine furniture books. They are never read, not even opened, and might as well be sham books, made of wood. I have just heard (July 27, 1845) of a bookseller in 'the city' who possesses a letter written to him by a retired citizen, stating that he found the books he had bought from him too few for his shelves. Four shelves of three feet three inches each were left unfilled. And he requested that the bookseller would send a sufficient quantity of books, of as good appearance as the last, to fill these shelves before Saturday next, as he was to have a party of friends that day.

A FORTUNATE BIT OF BAD USAGE.—Peter Thomson, a joiner in a small way, competed for the designs of the Houses of Parliament. The seeming presumption of the poor man's attempt, led to a droll sarcastic article against him in one of the London newspapers, in which he was ridiculed as ostentatiously trying to invoke sympathy and wonder. The attack hurt his feelings severely, but he had strength of mind to endeavour to overcome its bitterness, and learnt the article by heart. One day soon after the appearance of this effusion, Sir

Henry Hardinge, equerry to the king (William IV.), came in his carriage, and found Peter working at his bench. He was commanded to bring Peter to see the king, who had been interested in him in consequence of seeing the article in the newspaper. The king, on conversing with Thomson, was so much pleased with him, that he gave him several commissions in his trade, and afterwards obtained for him some government employment. This laid the foundation of Peter's fortune. He successfully engaged in a joinery concern at Bankside, Southwark.

LOVE OF FUN IN ANIMALS.—It is well known that lambs hold regular sports apart from their dams, which only look on composedly at a little distance to watch, and perhaps enjoy their proceedings. Monkeys act in the same manner, and so do dogs, the friskiness of which resemble that of children. Mr Leigh Hunt, with whom I supped this evening, told me that he had observed a young spider sporting about its parent, running up to and away from it in a playful manner. He has likewise watched a kitten amusing itself by running along past its mother, to whom she always gave a little pat on the cheek as she passed. The elder cat endured the pats tranquilly for a while; but at length becoming irritated, she took an opportunity to hit her offspring a blow on the side of the head, which sent the little creature spinning to the other side of the room, where she looked extremely puzzled at what had happened. An irritated human being would have acted in precisely the same manner.

DOG WITH CAT-LIKE HABITS.—Mrs Loudon has a dog called Fairstar, a small pretty creature of the spaniel kind, which she brought up among cats, and apart from her own species. The result is that the animal is cat-like in many of her habits. She laps milk like a cat, and is fond of it, which dogs generally are not. When she catches a fly, she plays with it as the cat does, before she devours it. She is also extremely timid respecting any dogs which she meets out of doors. In short, the whole natural demeanour of Fairstar is very much that of a cat (July, 1845).

ADAPTIVENESS.—There is a quality of human nature which may be called adaptiveness. Some persons readily adapt themselves to any new society into which they may be thrown; others not. When a man rises in the world, it is often found that his wife does not, cannot rise with him. When he is disposed to live in a good style, and associate with persons of superior rank and attainments who would be glad of his society, she remains immovable in her original habits, and disdains to assume the position that has fallen to her lot; at the same time, perhaps, not refraining from extravagance in dress and other expensive luxuries. Sometimes this indisposition to rise does not proceed solely from want of the intellect and taste requisite for the purpose, but from a kind of wilful perversity. Not finding that new acquaintances attribute any peculiar merit to her, or pay her any particular attention, she affects to hold lightly the marks of approbation bestowed upon her husband, and takes a kind of pleasure in not favouring his advance. In some cases, the mere sense of awkwardness under the new circumstances, blended with inherent shyness, may operate to the same effect. Any way, a wrong is done, that usually leads to domestic unhappiness. In those cases in which the wife

was taken from a humble station, and had no sort of education or training in lady-like manners, there is something to excuse, and possibly not much pity for the husband. It is not, however, such cases that are meant, but those in which the wife was fairly educated and trained in a respectable rank of society, and who really could comport herself properly if she liked. Surely women ought to consider it as a sacred duty to adapt themselves as far as they may to their changed condition, to put a constraint on their natural inclinations, if need be. A regard for the happiness of the husband fairly demands it.

A NOBLEMAN OF WEAK INTELLECT.—The Earl of R——, a Scottish nobleman, at the middle of last century, was of weak intellect, though he sometimes said a clever thing. He was at one time detained in the Canongate jail, as men are now kept in lunatic asylums, that he might do no harm to himself or others. Some English officers visiting the prison, asked him, with some surprise, how he got there. 'Much as you got into the army,' said he; 'less by my own deserts than the interests of my friends.'

His lordship being brother-in-law to Lord Lovat, was suspected of Jacobite inclinations, and for this reason, after the suppression of the insurrection of 1745, he had to undergo an examination by the state officers. On its being imputed to him that he had wished well to the rebels, while they remained in Edinburgh—'Me,' he cried; 'me wish them weel! A pack of low-lived scoundrels, as I told them they were, that would never do ony gude in this world, but gang to the next in a wuddy!'—meaning the gallows. 'How, my lord, did you really tell them so?' 'That I did—only I let them be twa mile away first!'

THE PATH.

BACKWARDS I look along my path,
A pleasant path by lawn and lea.
The thrush and linnet sing no more,
No longer hums the summer bee.
The flowers are fled: the leaves are dead
On shrub and tree.

Forward I look along the path
That I, alas, have still to tread.
A dreary waste, vague shapes of pain,
Are there, that fill my soul with dread.
Better than trace that woful space,
Be with the dead.

Upwards I look beyond the way
That I, forlorn, have still to go;
The cool dews fall from golden stars
That glide where tempests never blow,
Nor sounds of sighs ascend the skies,
Nor tear-drops flow.

*On Saturday, February 7, 1874, will be commenced
a Novel, entitled*

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By the Author of Found Dead.

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No. 527.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

A HOMELY HEROINE.

'WHAT can hae come owre Archie?' murmured Kirstie Brydone, as, for the twentieth time that day, she rose and went to the cottage-door to look for her husband. It was between two and three on the afternoon of Hogmanay, the last day of the year. On every side undulating ranges of hills met her eye, and seemed to close in the wide valley from the world beyond. The sun was low in the west, enveloped in a strange reddish haze; behind the hills to the north, great masses of heavy clouds were rolling up, piled one above another; a bitter icy wind whistled down the valley, bearing on its wings an occasional snow-flake; while to the south the great range of hills rose up, clear and distinct in their slight mantle of snow, against the purplish sky. Kirstie looked round in all directions, but could see nothing of her husband, who had been absent since the early morning, and saying to herself: 'I wish I saw him safe hame; it's gaun to be a wild night, I doubt,' she closed the door, and returned to the fireside. She put on some more peats, made herself certain that the kettle was boiling, so that she might 'mask' the tea as soon as Archie came in; then, drawing forward the little table which was all ready set for tea, she sat down on a low chair, and resumed her occupation of rocking the cradle. As she bent over the fair little baby it contained, the firelight lit up a very homely face; a mouth rivalling in width the famous Meg of Harden's; small gray eyes, and a low forehead; and yet the face was not without its redeeming points. The large mouth disclosed two rows of pearly teeth; the eyes were frank and sweet, with a confiding trustfulness in them; and the forehead was crowned with masses of thick soft brown hair. She was remarkably tall, nearly six feet, and splendidly proportioned, with the exception of her arms, which were rather long. And at the time of her marriage—just a year before this—there were many jokes passed upon the fact that she was two or three inches taller than her husband, who was little and slight, with a fair boyish face, which made him look

younger than Kirstie, though he was twenty-five, and she was only twenty-two. Archie Brydone let them laugh away, and could well afford to do so, for none knew so well as himself what a treasure he had got in this homely wife of his.

When Kirstie was a little lassie of eight years old, her father and mother died of fever within a few weeks of each other, and left her a friendless orphan. Strangely enough, her father, who was a shepherd also, had had this very herding of Dynfoot, and the cottage to which she returned as a bride, was the same in which she had passed a happy childhood. Mr Gray, the farmer of Auchensack, her father's master, took her to the farmhouse, and there she remained till she was married, first as a little herd-girl, then as nurse to the children, and finally as dairymaid. It was during the two or three summers which she spent herding the cows that she first knew Archie Brydone. He was a delicate puny boy, who even then looked young for his years, and his parents feared at one time that he was going to be lame, though he grew out of it afterwards. His father had taken a dairy on the neighbouring farm of Barbreck, and Archie was set to the task of herding, a very necessary one in those great stretches of moorland and pasture, where there were few, if any, proper fences.

In their pastoral employment the two children became inseparable companions. Archie was a smart boy, and a good reader, and many a lesson he gave Kirstie, who was a diligent, though not very apt pupil, for at all times of her life her heart was infinitely greater than her intellect. At other times he would read aloud to her, while she worked her stocking; and sheltered by an old plaid, which preserved them alike from sun, wind, and rain, they passed many happy hours. Finally, Archie thought he must learn to 'weave' stockings for himself, and, under Kirstie's tuition, soon became nearly as clever at it as she was herself; and so her dream of a companion-knitter under the rowan-tree was realised, though very differently from what she anticipated, as dreams so often are.

Two happy summers passed in this way, and then Archie, having outgrown his lameness, was

sent away to farm-service; and when he became older, went to the Highlands as a shepherd. For two or three years his father and mother remained at Barbreek dairy, and Kirstie heard of him occasionally from them; but eventually they went to a large dairy down in Galloway, and for several years she did not know whether he were dead or alive; but she did not forget him, and on fine Sunday afternoons in summer, sometimes walked as far as the rowan-tree, with which he was inseparably associated.

A great surprise was in store for her, however, for he came back to Mr Gray's as young herd. Kirstie had not heard the name of the young man who was coming, indeed had heard nothing about him, except that he was coming from the Highlands. She was in the kitchen alone when he came in: it was dusk, and she did not recognise his voice; but the firelight was shining full upon her as she stood making the porridge, in the cook's absence; and after a minute's quiet survey, he was certain that this tall girl, with the grand figure and plain face, was no other than his old friend Kirstie.

'Do ye ever herd the coos for onybody, nowadays, Kirstie?' he said at length, very quietly.

'Preserve us a!' exclaimed Kirstie, nearly upsetting the porridge in her agitation; then, as the fire blazed up, and disclosed the fair curly head and merry blue eyes she remembered so well, she said with tearful eyes and trembling voice: 'Can this be you, Archie Brydone? Glad am I to see ye back again. But what a start ye gie me, for mony's the time I've wondered if ye were alive.'

'Alive and hearty,' replied Archie, with rather a forced laugh, to hide the emotion he really felt when he saw how agitated she was. 'But the truth is, I wearied o' the Highlands; it's a dull thing being one's lane in a house for months, and I thoct I would try the Low Country again.'

Archie was surprised to find, as time passed on, and he and Kirstie dropped into their old friendly terms, how little changed she was in mind from what she used to be; the same simple, guileless creature, strong as a rock for truth and right, and thoroughly unselfish.

Mr and Mrs Gray were so much attached to her that they looked on her almost as a child of the house, and yet she was so unconscious of any special favour, that she quite avoided all jealousy on the part of her fellow-servants. Archie staid steadily on at Auchensack, and became almost as much a part of the household as Kirstie; the other servants went and came, but these two remained fixtures.

When Archie had been three years with Mr Gray, the shepherd at Dynefoot left to take a small farm, and Mr Gray offered it to Archie, adding, with a sly glance, that he would have to look out for a wife in that case. Archie thanked him, and asked for a few days to think of it, which Mr Gray willingly granted. That was on a Saturday; and on the afternoon of the Sunday, which was a bright September day, Archie asked Kirstie if she would take a walk with him to the rowan-tree; and there, at the place where they first met, and where they had played and worked as children, he asked her if she would be his life-long companion. No one can doubt what Kirstie's

answer was; he had been the one love of her childhood and of her later years, and the sun never shone upon a prouder, happier bride.

It was an additional source of happiness, too, the fact that they were to live in her old home, though many a one would have thought it a solitary place enough. It was three miles from Auchensack, and about as far from the nearest shepherd's house, and was away quite up among the hills, commanding a splendid view of one of the loveliest of the lovely Dumfriesshire valleys. It was a roomy, comfortable cottage, white-washed, with a thatched roof, a nice garden in front, and two elm-trees at one side. Inside, it was the picture of comfort; the kitchen especially, with its sanded floor clean as hands could make it; the dresser gay with willow-pattern plates and many coloured bowls and 'pigs';* the long settle by the fire; and the antique clock, which had belonged to Kirstie's grandfather. It stood just about a hundred yards from the mouth of the deep, dark, precipitous glen which took its name from the Dyne, a little burn which brawled along at the foot.

Archie entered on his duties at Martinmas, and they were married on the Hogmanay following, at Auchensack, when there was a dance in the barn and general merry-making. And so time had slipped away, every season seeming happier than the last, Kirstie thought, and happiest of all, the dark days of winter, since a little blossom came upon a November day, and filled their cup of happiness to overflowing. It was a lovely, fair little infant, with Archie's blue eyes, and flaxen hair; and he was, if possible, more passionately fond of it than Kirstie herself.

Kirstie thought of her happy lot, with a deep unutterable thankfulness, as she sat absently roeking the cradle. She was one of those women who have great difficulty of utterance, whose words are few, but their thoughts many, and above all, her religion was truly a part of herself and of her daily life. The sun had now set, and darkness was coming on, while the wind whistled more shrilly than ever, and with an eerie sound, which made her shudder. She was becoming really anxious about Archie's long-continued absence. He had left home in the morning with the first peep of daylight to climb the hill, according to his custom, and intended to come home, as he usually did, about eleven.

She tried, meanwhile, to calm her anxiety by thinking that something might have happened to one of the sheep, or that he might have been detained, gathering them into the folds in preparation for an approaching storm. At length, she heard the dog scratching at the door; and joyfully said she to herself: 'He canna be far off noo;' but on opening the door, the dog, instead of running joyfully to the fire, or curling himself up beneath one of the beds, as he usually did, began to jump fawningly upon her, and to whine pitifully: she could not understand the reason of this at all, when suddenly an idea burst upon her mind, which speedily became a certainty. Archie was ill, had hurt himself, perhaps, somewhere on the hills, and the dog had come for help. She shook a deadly faintness which crept over her at the thought; and, rousing herself, she drew the fire together, in case of sparks, placed the cradle

* Crockery.

on one of the beds for safety, and throwing a plaid about her, followed the dog.

During these preparations, 'Laddie' had stood still and motionless as a statue; but when she moved towards the door he jumped with delight, fawned upon her, and licked her hands, and then bounded hastily forwards in the direction of the glen. The ordinary route along Glen Dyne was to climb the steep hill which rose behind Dynefoot, and then to keep by a footpath which wound along the top of the glen for about a mile. There was no fence or protection whatever; and there were several sad stories told of people who had missed their footing, or, in the darkness, had wandered too near the edge, and so had come to a violent end. Just two winters before this, an unfortunate man had perished not far from the mouth of the glen. He was a packman, with a donkey, who was well known at all the farm-houses; and was, in his way, a well-to-do man, with a well-assorted pack, the contents of which ranged from ribbons and jewellery to note-paper, hair-pins, and staylaces. In fact, it was designed to supply all the little wants of a female population, who were seldom able to indulge in the luxury of going a-shopping. Tom Carson the packman was therefore a great favourite, and not only because of his wares, but because he was a cheery, pleasant fellow; and Kirstie remembered well what consternation was caused in the kitchen at Auchensack when a rumour arose that Tom Carson had disappeared; and it was thought that some one must have made away with him, for the sake of his pack, which, as it was new year's time, was unusually heavy. It was only conjecture, however, for nothing could be heard of him; but when at last the snow, which lay that winter for several weeks, had melted, the mystery was solved, and poor Tom Carson, with his donkey and his pack, were found at the bottom of Glen Dyne. It was supposed that he had been coming to Auchensack, where he was a great favourite—that he had been overtaken by the storm—that the donkey had lost its footing, and in his efforts to save the poor animal, he had perished along with it. It was a sad story, and cast a deeper shade of gloom over Glen Dyne, which indeed bore no good name already. As Kirstie toiled up the hill, it all came back appallingly afresh to her memory.

About half-way up the steep precipitous side of the glen, there ran a very narrow, insecure footpath called the 'Tod's Path,' owing to a fox-burrow up near the head of the glen. Few people ever ventured along it, except the gamekeepers and the shepherds, and even they did not care to try it except in broad daylight. At the point where this path turned off from the face of the hill, 'Laddie' began again to jump upon his mistress, then running a few steps along the path and coming back, he wagged his tail and looked up at her with beseeching eyes, saying, as plainly as dog could say, in his mute but expressive language: 'Come this way.' Kirstie did not hesitate to follow, bad though the way was, for it led, she was sure, to her husband; and besides, as a little child she used often to come with her father before she knew what fear was, and therefore knew every turn and bend in the path. Toiling up the wild solitude, her feelings overcame her, and unconsciously forced from her lips the cry: 'O Archie, Archie, my man, where are ye?'

Just at this point, a little runlet of water which came down from the hill had spread itself across the path in a solid sheet of ice. Kirstie hesitated, but there was no other way; it was life or death, and she must hasten on: so she did cross, but her foot slipped, and she narrowly escaped falling. The snow now began to fall more quickly and in large flakes, and she had to trust more to memory for the path than actual sight. On and on she went, however, till she had gone nearly a mile up the glen, when suddenly 'Laddie' gave a short joyful bark, and she saw a dark object stretched across the path. It was indeed Archie; he was leaning against a large stone which seemed to have broken his fall; his hair was powdered with snow, his face was white and rigid, and his lips were livid. Kirstie never doubted but that he was dead, and threw herself on the ground beside him, with a cry of agony; when suddenly his eyes opened—a conscious look came into his face, and he said in faint, low tones: 'Is that you, Kirstie? I thoocht I was gaun to dee my lane, and never see ye mair.' 'Oh, wheest, Archie, wheest,' she wailed; 'ye'll break my heart; dinna speak that way.'

He continued, after a moment's pause: 'I slipped at the tap o' the brae, and I maun hae dwamed,* for I wakened as eauld as a stane wi' Laddie lieking my faae; so I sent him hame, purr beast. No help could do me guid now, Kirstie,' he said, as if in answer to the thoughts which were passing through her mind at the moment. 'My leg is broken; and I've hurt my side; and wi' the darkness and the storm, there's nobody fit to help me, gin they were here; and it wad be hours before onybody could come. O Kirstie, woman, I maun leave ye and the wee bairn,' he added with a choking sob.

Kirstie did not answer for a moment; and then her face was lighted up with a look of high resolve, and she said: 'Mony a time, Archie, have I wondered why the Lord gied me my great strength and my lang arms, but I see it now; and if it be His will, I will save you this nicht.'

'Ye're no fit to carry me,' Archie remonstrated feebly; 'and think what a road, Kirstie.'

'Do I no ken the road better than ony herd in the country?' she replied; 'and we maun ask for help higher than man's.'

As she knelt beside her husband, with the snow falling on her upturned face, and the wild wind whistling round, and in few and simple words, as if she were speaking to a near and loving friend, asked the aid of the Almighty arm to guide her on her perilous way, and keep her feet from falling, Archie Brydone, even in the midst of all his pain and weakness, felt that he had never before truly known his wife. She then lifted Archie, as gently and tenderly as she could; but he gave a deep groan, and she found that he had fainted quite away. 'Maybe it's better,' she murmured; 'he winna know, till the danger's past.' Then, with another upward glance for help, she set out on her dangerous way. It would, by this time, have been perfectly dark, but there was a little moonlight, just enough to shew the mere outline of the path and the glen. The path itself was, by this time, quite covered with snow; every step was taken in uncertainty; she hardly knew if she were keeping the path at all. Strong as she was, she staggered

* Fainted.

at times under her burden, while everything around looked wild and weird in the half-darkness and the thick-falling snow. 'Laddie' trotting in front of her, and guiding her on her way, was the only gleam of comfort she had. She went along more by instinct than sight, and after a weary while, she began to think that she must be coming near the mouth of the glen, when suddenly she remembered the sheet of ice across the pathway. If she could hardly cross it then, what was to become of her now, with a heavy burden, and the snow covering the path, so that she could not tell where she was going? Her heart sank within her; she remembered that it was near that very spot that poor Tom Carson was killed, and she felt as if she could not move another step. Just at this moment a ray of moonlight pierced through the drift, and shewed her young Archie's head resting on her shoulder; the face was more boyish than ever in its pallor, and the rings of fair hair lay damp on his forehead. New strength seemed to come to her arms with the sight, and new courage and faith to her heart, and she went bravely on a few more steps, and then, to her joy and surprise, found herself safe out on the hillside, and far past the dangerous place. She had passed it safely and quietly, not knowing of the danger till it was gone. She had the wind to contend with now, and the snowdrift in her face; but in her thankfulness, she felt as if she could overcome everything, and soon was within a few yards of their own door. Then her strength utterly failed; she struggled with beating heart and labouring breath against her weakness, as if it were some physical obstacle; and she did manage, though how she never knew, to reach the house, enter the door, place Archie on the long settle by the fireside, and then—fell on the floor perfectly unconscious. Poor 'Laddie' ran from one to another, not knowing what was the matter, and howling pitifully, while the baby was wailing in the cradle. Help, however, was near at hand, and in a few minutes two men from Auchensack entered the cottage. They had been sent rather against their will, and felt as if they were on a wild-goose chase; but when they arrived at the house, they were horrified with the state of matters, and thankful that a childish fancy—as they thought it at first—should have been the means of bringing them to Dynefoot so opportunely.

The children at Auchensack were extremely fond of Kirstie, and it was a favourite amusement of theirs, every afternoon, as the dusk came on, to watch for the light appearing in her window. When long after the usual time, none appeared, they could not understand it at all; the anniversary of her wedding-day too: what could be the matter? At last, Mr and Mrs Gray became uneasy themselves, and sent off the two men, who arrived at the very time when their help was most needed.

Archie 'came to' after a little; but nothing they could do had any effect in rousing Kirstie; so one of them went back to Auchensack, and from there was sent on for the doctor. Poor man, he was just sitting down to supper, at a cosy little party, which had assembled to see the 'old year out and the new year in,' when he was told that the shepherd at Dynefoot had had a bad fall in the glen, and his wife was 'near deid' with carrying him home.

'Carrying him home,' said one of the company

incredulously; 'why, it is impossible; the woman must be an Amazon.'

'So she is, both in body and soul,' replied the doctor, who had known her for years; 'and as it is on her account and her husband's, I don't mind the long ride over the snow one bit; so, good-night, and a happy new year to you all.'

Kirstie was not 'near deid,' but she got a great shake, and for some time was graver and quieter than her wont; as if the wings of the Angel of Death had really passed closely by her. One lasting trace she had of her exertions that night—her pretty brown hair was ever after thickly streaked with gray.

Archie, after being ill for a long time, became eventually quite strong and hearty again; but all his life after was influenced by that wild night in Glen Dyne, and the lesson in simple faith taught him by his wife.

When the 'Laird' came to Auchensack, next autumn, for the shooting, he was so pleased to hear of Kirstie's exploit, knowing the glen well, as he did, that he gave the cottage at Dynefoot to her and Archie for their lifetime, promising to build one, if required, for another shepherd. Kirstie was amazed beyond measure with this gift, and it was a mystery to her why people called her a 'heroine.'

GERMAN AND ITALIAN VAGRANTS.

ENGLAND has enough of painful sights of native origin without needing the importation of what is disagreeable. We do not now happen to see homeless mendicant negroes, such as occasionally cast up as refugees during the existence of slavery in the West Indies. From France, at successive political convulsions, we get a fair share of voluntary exiles, sufficient to keep up the stock of swarthy foreigners about Leicester Square, who, though not all that one could wish, live, on the whole, very peaceably, and somehow, after a time, either return home or melt away into the general population. A greatly more annoying set of exotics are German brass bands, who perambulate town and country, too frequently making dreadful noises on trumpets of all shapes and sizes, performing some kind of tunes, which they expect to be rewarded for by donations of white money. These German bands, dressed sometimes in a kind of slop uniform, are seen in various countries of Europe and America. Neither hill nor sea stops them. France, since the war, has, for sufficient reasons, not been honoured with their presence. But Italy has. You will meet them in easy pedestrian fashion crossing the Splügen. They are seen in Palermo, in the Chiaia at Naples, in the Isle of Skye, and the streets of New York and Chicago—everywhere, night and day, intent on pestering mankind with their usually hideous tunes and gathering sixpences. Carrying no luggage, and not at all nice as to lodgings, they are ready, like nomadic gypsies, to sleep in barns, in the holds of ships, or anywhere. Christendom, with a groan, submits to the visitation—a calamity which can no more be helped than the arrival of cholera, or any other migratory epidemic.

Where these German musicians come from, is a

mystery. Are they detachments of the Prussian *Landwehr* out on a rumble, or what? As curiosities in anthropology, one would like to know something definite about them. Theirs is a pleasant, rollicking sort of life, with the happy consciousness that wherever they pitch their camp, they will be paid to go away about their business with their fantastic instruments. Only one thing has vexed them in their wanderings. They have not the field to themselves. Rivals in the art of distracting ears and extorting coppers and sixpences meet them on their own ground in all quarters. This is a serious hardship. In London and other large towns, they cannot but consider it an injustice that their scientific snorting and grunting on French horns should, in a mendicancy point of view, have to compete with the basely mechanical grinding by Italians on barrel-organs and hurdy-gurdies. It will, therefore, be acceptable news for these ubiquitous German performers to know that the civilised world is about to be quit of the hurdy-gurdyists and other juvenile Italians in the begging line, who divert from them so much of what they believe to be their own proper due. In the prospect of this relief, we beg to sympathise, though on different grounds. We shall be rid of a spectacle of misery, as well as of at least one department of street nuisances; and in time, if it please Bismark—for we have nobody else to look to—we may possibly see an end put to the other.

It has never been alleged that our German tormentors are in the category of slaves sent out by tyrannical masters on a plundering expedition. That is something in their favour. They apparently go about as independent excursionists, no one else being implicated in their financial proceedings. All the cash they scrape together is presumed kept to themselves, with a view to retiring on a genteel competency, after a few agreeable strolls round the world. Their street rivals, the Italian youths, are on a different footing. They come as slaves owned by rapacious task-masters, who carry them about from place to place to beg money, which they are obliged to render up on demand. In the looks and behaviour of these poor beings is seen none of the audacity of the free German rovers. There is about them a certain characteristic timidity. Wearying they are, no doubt, with their incessant grinding; but they do not importune outright. They have not the Teutonic fortitude to ring bells and knock at doors, asking for a benefaction; but rather hang about, waiting to excite compassion. Such is the visible difference between German and Italian street musicians.

The practice of deporting boys from Italy on begging excursions was never legalised. It sprung up when the country was divided into several petty states, and little attention was paid to the general welfare of the people. In the pinched circumstances of the small cultivators on the flanks of the Apennines, and the slight prospect of any improvement of their condition, they felt it to be a relief to get rid of some of their children. They did not absolutely sell them, for that would have been revolting even to their blunted feelings, besides being illegal, but they too easily listened to proposals to take the children off their hands in the quality of apprentices for a specified term of years. At about eight years of age, when able to undergo some fatigue and take care of themselves, the little fellows, with their swarthy complexion

and poor garb, were, on some kind of promises as to good treatment, handed over to the tender mercies of as great a set of ruffians as ever dealt in negroes from Zanzibar or the Gold Coast. Carried off, they were never more seen by parents or any one interested in them. In the cottages among the hills of Parma and Lucca, mothers may have sighed to know the fate and the whereabouts of the little boys they had credulously parted with, but they sighed in vain. The little exiles had parted for ever from the old homes in the Apennines, and were dressing their sad weird in the far distant lands to which, for the sake of gain, they had been heartlessly carried.

Genoa, as we understand, has been a principal outpost for this species of traffic. Just as Scotch boys, after being kidnapped (with the covert knowledge of magistrates), were long ago shipped off in cargoes from Aberdeen to the North American Plantations, so have these small Italian boys in our own times been carried away in batches from Genoa, and landed in England and other countries, to beg in the streets for the merciless men to whom they are lucklessly assigned. Puro mendicancy, as they well know, would be speedily checked. The wretches who carry on the business have accordingly resorted to colourable methods of industry wherewith to employ their victims. The lesser boys are sent out to shew tame white mice, or that more interesting rodent, a marmot, half-way between a rabbit and a rat, which needs no cage, but nestles in the bosom, and acquires an affection for its juvenile exhibitor. Who among us have not seen the poor little white mice and marmot boys, crouching timidly along the pavement, in the hope of having bestowed on them a small coin in pity to their beseeching eyes—a coin, not for themselves, but the master who empties their pockets, beats them if unsuccessful, and barely gives them the means of keeping soul and body together!

Advancing a stage, if he does not die in the meantime from hard usage, the white-mouse boy is promoted to the hurdy-gurdy, care being taken to keep up a certain foreign look about him, as it helps to interest those who condescend to listen to his jerking, bizzing kind of music. So far initiated in grinding, and grown somewhat, more from good temper than good feeding, he is qualified to handle an organ, and is launched as a professed rival to the German bands, working his way through the streets, and by-and-by getting a notion of what houses are inclined to patronise his efforts. With an experience in popular musical tastes, which, strange to say, the Germans seldom acquire, he knows the class of tunes that will give satisfaction, and his organ is constructed accordingly. Villainous as are the proprietors of organ-boys, they have, at all events, a knowledge of what will please, and do not drive householders distracted with tunes which are little else than an inharmonious series of snorts and groans which not many can relish or understand. In some few cases, the organ-boy outlives his so-called apprenticeship, and sets up business on his own account, getting credit for an organ that plays popular airs from the builders of these instruments, or hiring one for the day. In other cases, he falls into the trade of selling stucco images, though that is rather in a declining way, which may be regretted, for, poor as was the material of this mimic statuary, the diffusion of

such articles among a humble class of dwellings could not but have a certain elevating effect.

Unfortunately, few of the boys carried off from Italy live to be independent labourers in this or any other country. The hardships they endure amidst a people with whose language they are unfamiliar, cause them to die early, making way for fresh importations. Such is an outline of this odious white slave-trade in the heart of Europe, which might have gone on uninterruptedly without serious challenge, but for a new variety of cruelty. This was the deportation of Italian girls on a similarly pretended contract of apprenticeship; the results which followed so great an iniquity being such as requires no brilliant imagination to picture. Scandalised by this addition to old practices, consuls and respectable Italian residents in England have aided in the clamour to redress the wrongs inflicted on boys as well as girls. Much to its credit, the parliament of Italy, as reported by the press, have before them a bill to abolish the system of apprenticing children of less than eighteen years of age to strolling trades or professions, such as mountebanks, jugglers, charlatans, rope-dancers, fortune-tellers, expounders of dreams, itinerant musicians, vocalists or instrumentalists, exhibitors of animals, and mendicants of every description, at home or abroad, under a penalty of from two pounds to ten pounds for each offence, and from one to three months' imprisonment. It is to be trusted that this will shortly become law, and so put an end to one of the most crying evils of our time. W. C.

LADY LIVINGSTON'S LEGACY.

CHAPTER XL.—OFF ANTICOSTE.

OUTWARD bound, the good steam-ship *Quebec* went gallantly cleaving the waves of the Atlantic. Hers had been no fair-weather passage, no holiday trip, such as those quick summer runs between the Old World and the New, that form the delight of tourists, and win the eulogies of those to whom a cabin is a torture-chamber, and Neptune a grand inquisitor, fertile in devising torments for his seasick vassals. In mid-ocean, the *Quebec* had had to do battle for her life against an enemy powerful enough to test the toughness of her build, and the skill and daring of her captain and her crew. Caught in the wide-sweeping net of a giant cyclone, she had undergone such a buffeting as old sailors see but rarely in their seafaring career; and for many hours it had seemed as if the existence of vessel and ship's company hung by a thread, but she had struggled through the tempest without foundering. Then it was, with an ink-black sky above, with the deafening roar of the great storm, filling the murky air with a sound which superstition might easily liken to the rush and flapping of monstrous wings, as if some demon-brood were at large upon the deep, that it was seen of what quality men and women were.

On board of the *Quebec* were sundry persons of both sexes—of the masculine gender mostly—who kept up a goodly appearance before the world. There were fine old men; vigorous, argumentative persons in the prime of life; slapdash young fellows who doffed the world aside, and bade it pass. There were also dashing specimens of the girl of the period; iron-bound, tight-jawed old maids, encyclopædias of knowledge; matrons puffed up

with social dignity and moral pride, unconsciously imitating the frog in *Æsop's* vulgar fable. It was not these, among the passengers, who bore up the best in the hour of danger. Nor, among the forecastle Jacks, the firemen, deck-hands, and stokers, was it the brawling braggart, always in hot water when ashore, and whose fines for assaults and damaged glass were a heavy tax on his monthly wages, who was readiest to reduce sail, or to bear a hand at the wheel, when the decks were deluged by the clear green water breaking over rail and bulwark, and when boats were torn from the davits, and hen-coops full of cackling poultry, spars, rope-coils, and miscellaneous lumber, washed out to sea. Does any one suppose that in India, when the hostile cannon are nimbly served, and the horse-hoofs of the enemy's cavalry raise a miniature dust-storm, through which are dimly visible turbaned heads and glinting spear-points, and the foe come swarming in their strength, and the fire is hot, and the odds fearful, that it is the loud, dissipated, young officer, or the pompous, red-faced oracle of the mess-table, to whom the mentum for guidance? No; the true captain, the born leader, turns out to be some quiet, thoughtful fellow, of no account at ball and race-course, who springs forward when seniors fall or flinch, and whom, as if by instinct, the soldiers follow, modest and unassuming though he be, into the very jaws of death.

No one on board of the *Quebec* gave proof of a more impassable courage than did a young passenger, going out, under custody of the police, to take her trial at Montreal on a charge of murder. How had times changed with her since, less than a year ago, she had crossed to Europe in the same ship in which she was now a disgraced captive! Under the dreadful circumstances of her position, she demeaned herself as few others could have done, almost winning belief in her innocence from those who marked her simple dignity of bearing. When first the hideous charge was brought against her in England, she had scarcely made so much as a protest against its truth. It was different now. Calmly and firmly she had made her stand before the magistrate's petty tribunal in London. The Treasury lawyers, while agreeing that they had no choice but to send her for trial to the Dominion, had been staggered in their suspicions of her by the noble gentleness with which she endured the venomous verbal assaults of her foe and accuser, Aphrodite Larpent. There was now no petulance, no terror, nothing such as we are all prone to associate with the idea of a detected criminal.

Before Violet had been long at sea, the opinion of the little public on board of the steam-packet had undergone a considerable change. At first, none would eat at the same board with a suspected murderess. Mothers almost shrieked as they tore away the children who were attracted by her sweet face—children had always loved her—and came sidling shyly up to the beautiful lady who sat all alone, as if forsaken of all. The virtuous shrank from contact with her, as though she had carried the contagion of the plague in the hem of her robe. But soon there were two parties in the ship—the champions of Violet, and the partisans against her; and anon most of these latter lost the rancour of their hostility to her, and wavered in their minds as to her guilt. The worst that could be told of her had been told. But the first shock and horror of the accusation spent, somewhat of a reaction set

in. Suppose, so men and women said, the charge were false—the mere product of obvious malignity and of baffled greed; suppose Dashwood's written promise to have been a forgery, or if not so, to have borne a different construction from that damning one first put upon it: or, again, presume that the captain's intentions were evil, but not understood by this pure, simply nurtured girl, and that what seemed to others a fiendish compact, appeared to her as a mere pledge to marry, the condition being overlooked. An unfortunate accident—that was what she had called it from the first—denying, too, her own presence on the scene until the boy was already beyond reach, in the swirling waters towards which his drunken attendant had permitted him to stray alone—suppose, and it well might be so—that the catastrophe were no more than this, how cruel, how undeserved, was Miss Maybrook's present position!

Had Violet said more in her own defence, the disputatious element which lurks in us all, to a greater or less degree, might have become aroused. But she said very little, and those who took up the cudgels in her behalf did not, as often occurs, find their chief hindrance in her rash assertions or imprudent admissions. What was positively known of her antecedents was all good. Her reputation was without stain. She had tended the perishing poor in a time of selfish panic. In misadventures by flood and field, she had saved lives at no light risk to her own. Mrs Philip Dashwood, of whom she spoke in terms of affection, had been deeply attached to her; Lady Livingston, whose purloined will she had given back into proper keeping, when snatched from the hands of the thief, had bequeathed her money; little Charley had been her loyal, tiny friend. The telegraph had already wafted from each side of the Atlantic much information which had found its way into print, but although gossiping tongues had been let loose, nothing to Miss Maybrook's discredit had been elicited. On the contrary, her former schoolfellows, her former patronesses, were up in arms, and could the old English ordeal have been revived, Violet need have had little fear of walking barefooted and blindfold among the red-hot ploughshares, so many compurgators would have started forward to share her trial. Whose memory could rake up cruelty or baseness against her? She was Truth itself—free from all that degrades, all that soils, a reputation. Honest as the day, she had given good counsel to many a flighty young belle of the Canadian ball-rooms; and twenty tongues could avouch that she had striven to save even Aply Larpen from her *liaison* with her betrayer.

Then came the storm. There was, as the song says, work for the men, weeping for the women. The male passengers were compelled by the urgency of the common peril to bear a hand, for hours together, at the pumps. Seams had opened, rivets started; there was more water in the hold than a careful ship's carpenter likes to gauge with line and plummet; the engines strained their steel thews and sinews in fighting against the mountain waves and raging wind; the vessel groaned and quivered like a sentient thing in pain; six strong arms were not too many at the wheel; the canvas spread was but a storm-jib and storm-sail of the stoutest web and scantiest surface; it was hardly possible to keep the *Quebec* under steerage-way; no idlers could be spared. Cook and steward had to

toil with the rest of the crew. There was no time to nurse sick passengers, or to allay the fears of the timid.

In that emergency, Violet Maybrook had won golden opinions from all. Her spirit had actually appeared to rise at the imminence of the danger, but hers was the self-imposed task of soothing the terrified, and ministering to such as lay, ill and helpless, in the state-rooms which they never thought to quit alive. More than one of her own sex, who had been severe in judging her, was smitten to the heart at the sight of her frank and gentle kindness, and clung, shuddering, to her firm hand, as the tumult and the cries on deck seemed to indicate the nearness of the final disaster. The frightened children could be comforted by her, when they paid little heed to the feeble exhortations of their alarmed parents. But what she liked best was to be on deck, where no woman, save her, was seen throughout that terrible weather, her dark hair blowing wildly to and fro in the gale, and the drenching clouds of white spray flying around her. She was a favourite with the old commander of the ship—the very captain who had taken charge of her on the voyage to England the year before—and he had not the heart to send her below in the unceremonious fashion in which he would have ordered another to get out of harm's way. 'All I bargain for, my dear,' he said gruffly, 'is, that when the sea comes aboard of us, you'll remember to get hold of a shroud, or a ringbolt, or something that will bear clinging to; and keep your grip until the water runs off again. You're not a chicken-heart, I know that well enough, but keep cool when we ship more brine than is good for us.'

Nor was Violet a drone in the hive. Her strength allowed her to be of no use where hard labour was in question, but the rugged fore-castle men more than once set up a cheer of hearty admiration as they saw her fearless face and graceful figure amongst them, and worked the more valiantly, because their toil was done beneath the eyes of one so lovely and so insensible to danger. 'Have a care, Miss; for the love of Heaven, have a care!' was the cry, more than once, when some curling giant of a wave arched his foamy neck, like a wrathful serpent, over the ship's bows, and sent a very mill-race of seething water from stem to stern along the deck, washing away with it every loose object. But the sailors found before long that Violet's activity and presence of mind were safeguards that never failed her, and in their rough approval of her brave spirit and rare beauty, they gave her the name of the 'Luck of the Ship.' Nor was she less popular when she volunteered to serve out the rations of hot grog, for the distribution of which a man could ill be spared, to the passengers and seamen on duty at the clanking chain-pumps; with a kindly word of encouragement for those who were beginning to despair of keeping the leak under and the vessel afloat.

The storm was over now. The cyclone had gone whirling on to strew the seas with havoc elsewhere, and the *Quebec*, plugged and stopped, and bolted afresh, as to the damaged portion of her hull, was able to complete her voyage, with smooth water and light breezes. Cape Race, with its cap of cloud and mantle of fogs, that grisly sentinel that is thrust out so far, as the outpost of North America, was safely passed. So

was Cape Breton. Those were the savage cliffs of Anticosti that frowned, to the right, across the Gulf of the St Lawrence. To the left lay the shores of New Brunswick. The weather was clear; the engines worked well; yet a little, and the steamer would be breasting the swift stream of the mighty river that afforded a broad highway for the sharp keel to traverse. But what Violet had done, while yet the tempest strove for the mastery with all that centuries of patient progress have enabled weak man to construct, and almost conquered, was not forgotten when the haven was near, and the perils of the voyage at an end. An illogical half-belief in her innocence had grown up, and she was treated with a strange blending of pity and respect by young and old. It would have been well for Miss Maybrook if the living freight of the *Quebec* had been there and then impanelled as a jury to decide upon her case. The praise she had deservedly won, went far to prove to those around her that she was wrongfully accused of that great and heinous crime for which she was soon to take her trial.

From the first, she had been allowed almost entire liberty on board. There was a detective officer on board—no other than our old friend Sergeant Flint—whose errand would not be discharged until he should hand over the person of his prisoner to the colonial authorities. But, beyond keeping an eye upon her movements during the earlier portion of the voyage, the policeman in no way attempted to place her under any species of restraint; nor would the tough old skipper, naturally the autocrat of his own craft, have sanctioned any unnecessary harshness towards a passenger in Violet's position. A ship is, indeed, of all jails, the most difficult to escape from, and hence the comparative liberty granted to Miss Maybrook. It so happened, too, that poor Sergeant Flint was as abject a sufferer from sea-sickness—that capricious malady, which often spares the frail, to fasten its fangs on some robust victim whose bodily vigour contrasts oddly with the prostration which accompanies the complaint—as the feeblest woman on board. He had taken his 'spell' at pumping with the rest, but was scarcely fit for the labour, or to keep his footing on the slippery slope of the wet and heaving deck, and altogether cut as poor a figure during the storm as Robin Hood, in the old ballad, is rhythmically reported to have done as a fisherman on the gray waters of the North Sea. And when the fine weather returned, and the American shores were visible, the sergeant made no effort to reassert his authority over so popular a prisoner as Violet, who was free to do as she pleased during the short remainder of the voyage.

The *Quebec* was now sailing past Anticosti, a favouring wind aiding the engines in forcing her along, swiftly and smoothly; overhead, a sky of unclouded splendour. It was Sunday, and the captain, in accordance with the good old sea-going custom, had read aloud the service for the day to crew and passengers. There was something unusually solemn in the performance of this simple religious duty, when all hearts were as yet softened by the remembrance of the great peril so narrowly eluded, of having been snatched, as it were, from the brink of the ever-yawning grave that hungers for the bodies of shipwrecked men. There was no lack of reverence among the motley congregation on deck; and once or twice, when the

old skipper's voice trembled a little in repeating the words of some prayer or thanksgiving easily applicable to their late situation, the sobs of kneeling women could be distinctly heard. This brief ceremony took place in the morning; but in the evening, as the passengers gathered in the cabin, the grateful breeze blowing freshly in through the open skylights, it occurred to some one to request the captain to read a chapter of the Bible aloud; and with this petition he complied with a good grace, simply opening the volume that lay on the table beside him, and reading the portion of the New Testament on which his eyes fell.

This lecture—a real lecture, not the oration which we know by the name—did not last very long. It comprised, amongst other details, the succinct and enthralling story of the miserable ending of Judas Iscariot. Those few lines, coupled with a few earlier lines in the sacred history, served to present such an historical portrait of the recreant apostle as is rare in its completeness. The shrewd, mean, false man of the world; he who 'bore the bag, and kept what was put therein'; the greedy dissembler, the traitor cheaply bought when treason commanded a better market-price than lip-service, must yet have had a heart beneath the sad-coloured gabardine in the ample bosom of which he wrapped his thirty pieces of blood-bought silver. Either a genuine remorse, or the spiritual fear to which a Jew of old Jerusalem was especially liable, must have wrought powerfully upon a nature intrinsically base, perhaps, but not wholly hardened; for—'he went out and hanged himself,' leaving the silver coins, on which his haggard eyes beheld the rust of innocent blood, a shining heap on the floor of the Sanhedrim council-chamber. 'He went out and hanged himself.' Softly Violet's lips murmured the words, long after the book was closed, and the reader gone to attend to his duties. 'He went out and hanged himself.' She was strangely silent for some time after this, sitting a little apart, as her custom was, from the rest of the company, and saying little in answer to what was addressed to her. And presently she went on deck.

The ship was going steadily and well upon her course, but by no means so rapidly as in the forenoon. The chief engineer had reported that some part of the machinery, strained in the recent hurricane, when fires were piled up to their fiercest, and every ounce of available work, so to speak, screwed out of the hard-working mechanism that was the heart of the vessel, stood in need of careful management. At half-speed, therefore, the *Quebec* pressed on, and still it was darkling Anticosti, always Anticosti, that loomed upon the starboard bow. The stars were shining white, and the moon, a thin silvery crescent, glimmered in the violet sky. Below, millions of phosphorescent sparks, each with a life, each eager to devour some microscopic prey, each itself the food of mightier creatures of the deep, turned the tiny wavelets to ripples of lambent flame. Now and then the splash of a flying-fish, that had ventured far north that summer through the warm waters of the Gulf Stream, or the dash of a bonito amidst a glittering shoal of little fish, broke the silence. The foam swirled away from beneath the vessel's counter, a long white line that might be traced far off upon the sparkling, softly swelling sea.

'He went out and hanged himself.' A third, and yet a fourth time, did Violet repeat these

words. They seemed, for her, to possess some singular fascination.

The ship glided on. To-morrow she would sight the estuary of the great river; and in a day or two, passing between bluffs and forests, between wheat-field and pasture, between town and village, would thread her way up stream, past the fortress-city that Wolfe died to win, and Montcalm to defend, past islet and farm, to Montreal itself. How had the world changed towards Violet Maybrook since the same vessel bore her, last autumn, Europe-wards! Her venture was made, the game lost, the penalty to be paid. 'And he went out and hanged himself.'

She was almost alone, now, on deck. There were two or three knots of passengers aft of the mast, and, forward, some of the crew were collected on the fore-castle. There were the look-outs and the helmsman, and the men of the watch, and their officer; but they took no heed of her. Standing beside the bulwarks, she looked across the stretch of sea to where lay the rugged coast of Anticosti, black, inhospitable, abhorred of mariners. There it lay, the giant island, cold, pitiless, barren, with its rocky verge against which so many ships have been beaten to splinters, its frozen highlands where life is not, its hungry wilderness where many a wrecked sailor has stretched him out to die. Anticosti! one of those untamed, incurably savage spots of earth of which men make no profit.

'Yes; it is better so,' murmured the girl, bending over the side-rail, and smiling at the gently swelling waves that rose up, as if to meet her; 'far better so.' And she raised her head, and fixed her eyes first on the gaunt cliffs and foam-flecked shoals of Anticosti, then on a white, sinuous streak of swiftly flowing water, like a silvery path that twisted, serpentine, through the phosphorescent azure of the sea.

'I have thought of this place,' she said dreamily, 'ever since I passed it before.' Then she smiled again.

'Sleeping and waking'—such were her whispered words—'I have seen what I see now, often, and have felt, I knew not why, that here should be my grave—not under the grass and the daisies, where the white headstone should tell my name to those who have heard my story; and not, oh, not among the mildewed stones of the prison, where they would lay me. Whither, I wonder, would yonder eddy carry a drowned wretch? To some gaunt, shingly beach, no doubt; or perchance some rock-screened cove, on yonder cruel shore of Anticosti, where the screaming sea-birds should pipe their shrill requiem over the prey; and strange uncouth creatures should crawl forth from under beetling wave-washed stones to claim their share of the prize. What, to them—to the grim things of claws and teeth, and quivering feelers—to their monstrous brethren with long loose arms that twine around captured wreck, to crab, and cuttlefish, and sea-urchin, and medusa, are white limbs, and eyes that were bright once, and the dead daintiness of a rounded cheek, and the wild tangles of streaming hair that mingle with the sea-weed, as in mockery, at every heave of the wave! Yes; it is better so. It is fittest this way. "And he went out and hanged himself!"'

She bent far over the side-rail as she spoke those last words.

'A man overboard!' shouted the helmsman,

whose quick ear had caught the heavy splashing sound, and the sailors of the watch started forward in a moment, at the call.

'Back the engines there!' commanded the officer in charge of the deck. 'Quick, give her a turn to port, you at the wheel; and see to clear away the life-buoy, some of you! Can you see anything, Jem?'

This last question being addressed to one of the look-out men, who had sprung with cat-like agility into the rigging.

'Ay, ay, sir—yonder, where the eddy is. I think it's a woman,' answered the sailor.

'A woman!—it must be the lady who was alone here—Miss Maybrook, if I mistake not!' cried one of the passengers, hurrying up, and there was a shriek of female voices. 'Yes, the poor unhappy girl—yonder; see where her light-coloured dress shows just above the water. Oh, save her, save her!'

The captain was on deck now, and most of those below came rushing up, with loud outcries and exclamations of horror.

'Yes. Lower away a boat there! Quick, you lubbers! Pitch over another life-buoy, and another; and you, Mr Jones, keep her a point nearer shore, d'ye hear? The current runs like a mill-sluice.'

The skipper's orders were obeyed promptly, willingly. Scarcely had the boat, swinging from the fall-tackles, touched the water before the ready volunteers had dropped as by magic into their places.

'Give way, boys!' exclaimed the officer, as he grasped the tiller-lines, and the pliant ash-staves went feathering and flashing through the waves, the oarsmen bending to their work as if their thews and sinews were of steel. Four life-buoys were dancing on the surface of the water, the blue light attached to each irradiating the sea with a ghastly flare that lit up the darkling stretch of sea.

With engines barely pulsating, the steam-ship glided towards the place where Violet's floating form had been last seen, white and indistinct, like a dead swan borne by a swirl of eddying water, her light dress supporting her for a moment.

It was all in vain. In vain they called her name; in vain they burned fresh lights, and threw out fresh life-buoys, and brought the steamer nearer and nearer in, while the sound of lamenting voices grew loud on board, and a second boat, at the urgent entreaty of the passengers, was manned and lowered. But though the boats were pulled hither and thither, the sailors eagerly scanning every foot of the phosphorescent water that might afford a diver a chance, should a submerged human form be seen dimly through the waves, nothing was found; and at a late hour they rested, baffled, after their fruitless search. As the old captain had said, the current set strongly in towards Anticosti—strong, swift, pitiless, as the Necessity or Destiny in whose inexorable mandates the all-doubting Greeks believed. After a long delay, the *Quebec* pursued her voyage; but there was to be no trial at Montreal, no prisoner for Sergeant Flint to surrender to colonial justice. It was a higher tribunal before which Violet Maybrook would have to plead, and before its eternal bar she had hurried, poor, wayward rebel that she was. Lost! lost! and, until the Judgment Day, to be seen no more of men.

CHAPTER XLII.—BROUGHT TOGETHER.

Whitborne, always pretty, looked its best when Oswald reached it, towards noon, on one of those days when the bright south coast of England is seen to the best advantage: a blue sky mirrored in the blue sea; a sparkling flood of sunshine pouring down among the green nut-boughs and trailing wild-roses of the deep lanes, lighting up every variety of tint among the coloured pebbles of the beach, and rendering translucent the gold-green oak-leaves of the coppice in the hollow of the bleak down. There was a brisk breeze, too, mottling the wide-spread water with pearly flecks of foam, and fanning the cheeks of the loiterers who were enjoying the pleasures of their hard-won indolence as they basked upon the shingle, and concentrated the resources of the lately overtasked intellect on the blameless pastime of flinging smooth stones into the sea. There was a holiday aspect even in the red or brown sailed fishing-smacks that beat up against the wind, and the revenue vessel in the offing had quite a romantic air, with her taut rigging and spotless canvas, like a white-winged bird of prey.

When Oswald approached the Dingle, he thought that he had never yet done justice to the beauty or the peaceful influences of the place. On the occasion of his previous visits, he had merely regarded the widow's house as a sea-side residence in an out-of-the-way situation, and the jar and conflict of human passions and human interests had rendered him insensible to the quiet loveliness of that sweet retreat which Mrs Dashwood had elected for her home. But now he was happy, and in a mood to be pleased with everything, and it seemed hard to him to believe that this fairy-like little domain, where it appeared as if nothing that was evil could enter, could have been the scene of Aphrodite Larpent's bitter accusation, of Violet Maybrook's arrest, of the stormy scene at the reading of the recovered will. Surely, such events must have partaken of the nature of a bad dream, of some vision of the night that, when we wake, leaves a chill in our veins, a vague terror in our bewildered minds, but that a few minutes of healthy waking life suffice to dissipate.

'Beatrice!'—'Oswald!' It was all they said, for Beatrice, who had watched for his coming, had hurried down to meet her lover at the garden-gate, and their hands were linked together, and their eyes met. Whose memory cannot call back those delicious moments that might have been vulgarly measured as seconds, or as hours, or as reons of ages, when space was of small account, and time annihilated, and it seemed as though the gazing eyes could never take their fill of looking into the love-light shining from those other dear eyes opposite! Ah, well! this is a work-a-day world, after all, and as it has been truly said—to the confusion of the simple Epicureanism of some British lotus-eaters—that life cannot be all beer and skittles, so it cannot consist wholly of love-making. Even the wild birds sing their little hearts out in tremulous, quivering, crowded melody but once a year, when the spring plumage is new, and food and shelter are plenty, and the anxious parents of last season are free to mate again, and eager to undertake the cares of nest-keeping. 'Beatrice!'—'Oswald!' How little it was to say,

and yet how much may be conveyed by the artless intonation of so few syllables! No shorthand writer would indeed presume to give a *verbatim* report of the conversation of lovers; and if he did, the talk would poorly repay the stenographer's toil, so much is implied, so little spoken, in that curious language which they alone can use.

Then they remembered the world once more, and that they were not Ferdinand and Miranda on Prospero's enchanted island, and Beatrice blushed, and Oswald looked embarrassed, and their hands separated again, and Oswald opened the gate, and up the smooth garden-path they walked together to the house. They talked, but it seemed to both as if the true eloquence had been expended at that almost mute meeting of theirs. It had been one of those moments to which fond husbands and wives look back now and then, along the vista of years of wedded happiness, each to ask each that question—'Don't you remember?' which old schoolfellows, old friends, ay, and old sweethearts, are so ready with. They were happy now, those two, but not in that serene fashion that belongs only to secure possession. They had been parted long, and as it had seemed, hopelessly, and theirs were still the doubts and shapeless fears and sense of uncertainty, which make up much of the sum-total of the bliss of those who love. But the mention of the widow's name recalled Oswald Charlton and Beatrice Fleming to the fact that there were others near whose troubles and trials were by no means over.

'Mrs Dashwood is not ill now—or so, at least, she thinks,' said Beatrice sadly, in answer to the new-comer's inquiry. 'But I sometimes fear that she will never quite recover the blow; her former grief has been so cruelly renewed, poor thing, that she weeps for the child as if he had been taken from her but yesterday; and, besides, she had such a high opinion of Miss Maybrook, and so beautiful a trust in her affection for the child, and for her. I do not believe that she will ever smile again, but she is too good and gentle for sorrow ever to render her selfish.'

'It was a sad and terrible affair from first to last,' said the young barrister, lowering his voice as they drew near the door. 'I cannot say that I ever liked Miss Maybrook when I met her at the Fountains. There was something unnatural, to my fancy, in seeing so remarkable a person filling the duties of so trivial a position, and her presence seemed to introduce a tragic element into the household. Still, she had rare gifts of courage, grace, and beauty, and dreadful as was the crime laid to her charge, I can imagine her, under a different set of circumstances, acting nobly and well. There is an opinion afloat that the evidence against her may break down; although Sir Frederick's flight has confirmed the impression against both.'

'Yes, I never thought of it from then till now,' exclaimed Beatrice suddenly; 'there must have been a secret understanding between my cousin and Miss Maybrook from the first. Poor Lady Livingston once thought so, although her suspicions were easily lulled to rest.' And she related to Oswald the history of the casual glimpse which she had had of Violet and Dashwood standing together, by the boat-house, beside the river at Richmond, and how the dowager's attempt to detect the double-dealing of her young dependant

had been frustrated by the ready wit and prompt activity of the latter. Oswald shook his head.

'I have little doubt,' he said, 'that the informer's narrative is essentially true. Still, were it not for this poor lady, I could find it in my heart, for the sake of others, that the guilty should be left to the vengeance of Heaven—not punished here.'

'She has no vindictive feeling,' whispered Beatrice, as they passed in. 'In her abiding sorrow there seems no room for hate against the wicked doer of that evil deed, or against the treacherous kinsman who abused her hospitality as he planned it. I have not heard her use one word in all her weeping which implied a longing to be revenged for her great loss. But she is here to meet us.'

And indeed it was the widowed wife, the bereaved mother, in the mourning attire which since the child's death she had never ceased to wear—but looking strangely aged since first she offered a home to Beatrice on the dowager's death, and with a face that was waxen white, and thin hands that trembled. She was calm, now, however, although her voice shook a little as she said to Oswald:

'I have come, you see, to bid you welcome here, and to wish you joy. Dear Beatrice has told me everything. I am sure I hope, with all my heart, that you two will be happy. You may be thought fortunate, Mr Charlton, in having won the love of one of the sweetest, truest wives that ever man had, and if—my prayers!—She stopped, and pressed her hand to her side, as if a sudden pang had recalled to her the irreparable loss that for an instant she had seemed to forget; but in a moment more she resumed: 'I hope you will be married from my house—and soon. Beatrice, in her tender sympathy, was for staying here to nurse and care for me for a long time—the rest of the year, I think—before forming other arrangements; but I must not allow my misfortunes to cloud the innocent happiness of my young friends—for I trust to have your friendship too, Mr Charlton—so I shall claim to have a voice in your plans. Now, I will leave you to talk them over, for a while, but remember, let there be no sacrifice made for me!' And as she spoke, she clasped her thin hands together, and her lips moved silently, as if in the act of blessing, while she looked on them with her pure, gentle eyes, and then turned and walked slowly and feebly away.

'She looks sadly ill and altered,' whispered Beatrice; 'but how good and thoughtful she is; there is no repining aroused in her wounded heart by the sight of our happiness, for we are happy now, dear.'

'Yes, darling,' answered Oswald, as he drew her towards him and stooped to kiss her cheek; 'and she was right, too, to say that I had reason to be proud of the prize which I, unworthy as I am, have drawn in the lottery of life.'

Little remains to be told. The successive deaths of Bruce Larpent and of Violet Maybrook removed from human punishment two of those implicated respectively in the assault on Mr Goodeve, and in the suppression of the heir to the Dashwood baronetcy. The senior partner in the eminent firm of Goodeve and Glegg has never recovered from the rough handling and the heavy fall which he sustained when garroted, yet his name still heads the bills of costs which clients receive; while the

gray-haired child that it belongs to sits nodding feebly in his easy-chair—surrounded by the musical instruments on which at intervals he makes a feeble feint of preparing to play, and immensely interested by the newspaper paragraphs assiduously read out to him by his affectionate daughters, both of whom are at home, disputing the inheritance for the division of which they will not long have to wait.

Aphy Larpent paid the penalty which in this world sometimes attaches to being too clever. Had she come frankly into the arrangements of the Treasury lawyers, she might have earned, by her evidence against Violet on the charge of murder, practical impunity for her own lesser misdoings. But she stood out for better terms, haggling for compensation and expenses before she would consent to embark for Canada, and thoroughly disgusting the police and the Crown solicitors by her pertinacity in bargaining, and the jealous animosity which she betrayed against Violet, her early friend. The news of Violet's death, coupled with Dashwood's disappearance, turned the tables, and Aphrodite Larpent, no longer needed in the witness-box at Montreal, was placed in the dock of the Central Criminal Court, and there arraigned on an indictment of which the principal count was the unlawful possession of the diamond and sapphire cross found among her effects, and which was proved to have been the property of the Dowager Lady Livingston. She was sentenced for a term of seven years, and has as yet the larger portion of her sentence to work out before she again issues forth into the world.

Oswald and Beatrice are married long since, and they live, loving and beloved. The poor of Heavtree have reason to bless the day that delivered them from their short subjection to the squire of Pinchbeck, which close-fisted person retired discomfited to Lincolnshire; while Mr and Mrs Charlton have since then contrived to make themselves friends to small and great in that country-side, and are reckoned, both in Warwickshire and at Richmond, as the very type of a good and graceful lady and a generous, true-hearted gentleman.

So brief a time has elapsed since the date of these events, that it is still possible to borrow money from the Behemoth, to lose a little of it at cards or billiards to jovial Major Raffington, to have one's pulse felt by smooth old Sir Joseph Doublefee, or to be semi-strangled in a dark corner by the Ugly One and Craney. If we break the law, Sergeant Flint and Superintendent Starkey, staunch lime-dogs of Scotland Yard, are still ready to be slipped on our traces. Should we be lucky enough to be invited, we may still be crushed and trodden on in the attempt to ascend the crowded stairs of Snowdon or Blunderbore House, when her Grace or the Marchioness are hospitably at home to half-fashionable London. Mrs Gulp yet spasmodically lets lodgings in Great Eldon Street; and Mrs General Buckram, at Hampton Court, is always happy to receive a visit from any one armed with the necessary introduction, and to discuss the newest gossip and the alarming degeneracy of 'society.'

In Whitborne churchyard, a white headstone bears the name of Mrs Philip Dashwood.

And in the Far West of that wilder America that lies beyond the Rocky Mountains, wanders a

desperate, broken man, whom some take to be of English birth, though of no credit to the land of his origin, since a fiercer or a more profligate scoundrel does not range those regions. He is known by several names—was called Gibson in Arizona, Cook in California, and by many another alias at the mines or in the cities, where he roves, restless, as if he were pursued by the Furies; and when he has drunk more deeply than usual, mutters of ugly secrets that even his unscrupulous associates do not care to hear. Knave, duellist, gambler he is known to be, and suspected to be worse, and therefore looked askance upon as his handsome, reckless face appears in a new town. Some day his sin will find him out, and, shot like a dog in some ignoble tavern brawl, or hanged like a dog on a tree of the lynchers' choosing, there will be an end of Frederick Dashwood.

THE END.

ABOUT RETRIEVERS.

HAVING been a dog-fancier from my youth upwards, I should like to say a little about the retriever, which is, to my mind, by far the most universally sagacious of the tribe. I am never without two or three specimens of the animal to help me in my shooting operations, and at present I may speak of Bob as being at the head of the list.

Bob made his appearance at the early age of about two months old, or thereabouts, in a butcher's cart. I do not know to what indignities he was exposed between the period of his birth and his being weaned, but certain it is that he has ever borne a rooted and offensive dislike to tradesmen's carts in general, and to butchers' in particular. Tramps, too, are the object of much display of temper. Don't talk to me of mere instinct; that animal knows the difference between a tramp and an honest, steady workman better than anybody. So high are his own notions of integrity, that even if we are walking miles distant from home, it is not an easy matter to prevent Bob from attacking a tramp if one comes in his way.

As to his pedigree, he is the son of Sam, which was the son of Wisdom, which was the son of Dash. Dash was one of those wonderful beings who live once in a generation, rather to shew to what a height breeding may go, than as ordinary creatures. The special use of a retriever, as is well known, is to search for and pick up the game that has fallen. He accordingly must not only be a good finder but a good carrier. If possessing proper natural genius, he may be easily educated to carry a glove, a pocket-handkerchief, or any other trifle. I have even known a retriever able to carry a written order to a particular tradesman, and faithfully bring back an answer. Dash was a retriever of this sort—a most accomplished dog. He would retrieve a glove or a pocket-handkerchief if he had to go a day's journey for it; and to see him on the moors circumventing an old cock-grouse near the end of the season, beats all description. Dash's day was almost over when I knew him,

and although he would occasionally put a pack of meaner mortals to shame, his feats of extraordinary skill were getting few and far between. The prettiest thing I ever saw him do myself was on an occasion when a partridge was wounded by one of the party, but apparently not mortally so. Dash stood at 'tention,' his paws lightly but firmly planted on the ground, and his head on one side, with his ears cocked. He remained thus for two or three minutes, long after the birds had disappeared over the brow of the hill. He then started off in pursuit, and came back in a short time with the bird in his mouth. He had evidently waited until he heard the bird flop on the ground, dead or dying.

Wisdom, the son of Dash, I am sorry to say, belied his name; he was a stupid, heavy animal, and degenerated at length into the position of watch-dog in the stable-yard. The glories of the family, thus for a short time tarnished by the inaction of Wisdom, were, however, greatly revived in Sam, who, if he had come after Dash, would have been a marvellous dog too. As an instance of the practical turn which Sam's intellect took, I may relate the following anecdote: One evening his master went to a friend's house to escort his sister home, and, after remaining half an hour or so, went away with his sister, but forgetting to call Sam, who lay asleep under the hall-table. Samuel, being aroused by the servants when they came to lock up the house for the night, went home in high dudgeon, maintaining a dignified silence for several days. Another evening shortly afterwards my friend had the same errand to perform, and Sam again condescended to accompany him. On leaving the house, his master did not forget to ask where he was, and was informed that he was, as usual, asleep under the hall-table. 'But,' said the servant, 'he is determined you shan't go without him to-night.' On looking under the table, Sam was discovered fast asleep, but with my friend's cap and stick under his muzzle!

Sam was, however, so little an improvement on Wisdom, that it was thought necessary to import some new blood into the family; and of the union thus achieved, Bob is the result. What, as I have said before, were the conditions of the first eight weeks of this animal's career, I know not; but he is certainly the handsomest of all dogs since the days of Dash. Coming here as a puppy, and brought up with the children, he has the sweetest of tempers; and if increasing years have added a dignity to his deportment which Beauty has not, it certainly does not detract from his appearance. When visitors come to the house, he permits them to pat him to some extent, but he receives the attention rather as proper homage than as anything pleasant, and has no scruple in saying when he has had enough of it. Being now upwards of nine years old, he has discarded active gamboling, save, as has been said before, when there is an accumulation of irritation in a portion of his skin, or on other occasions of a like nature; but he was known recently

to fetch a stick off the pond, to oblige a little gipsy of a niece of mine. It was done, however, with so much deliberation, and so decidedly regarded as a favour, that the hint was taken, and the request was not repeated.

But what shall we say of Beauty, the curly-haired, hazel-eyed little siren? I found the little monkey about four years ago on the road-side, deserted by some brute or another, and evidently not more than three weeks old. I put her in my pocket, and carried her home, and fed her with warm milk off the point of my finger. She had a long struggle for life, but conquered in the end, and grew into a wonderful beauty. She is very small, being not much larger than a spaniel, but her points are perfect. Although nearly four years of age, she is as lively still as a puppy, and honest Bob often looks with astonishment, but not with disfavour, on her perpetual gambols.

Living as she has done with the children, of course she has been taught all sorts of tricks. My irreverent first-born, thinking to instil good principles into her, taught her that she should not eat if she was told it is Friday. So perfect is she now, that she will drop the most delicious morsel out of her mouth if any one says it is Friday, and only take it up again when she is assured by some one (on whom she can rely) that it is Sunday. Being a spoiled pet all her life, she has learned none of the sterner qualities, and makes a poor show in a turnip-field. She looks upon a day's shooting as something got up entirely for her own amusement; and much discounts gamekeepers and dogs like Bob by her inattention to the demands of sport. She much prefers leaping on an old gentleman's shoulders, and walking off with his hat, to stalking the largest covey of partridges that ever settled in stubble. I am afraid she is incorrigible; but I cannot help owning that the fault is my own, for we never had the heart to let her go through the flogging necessary to train the best dogs. Her mouth is as soft as butter, and when she can be made to take a serious view of anything, she carries beautifully without making a single mark, however soft the article may be. She carries an egg very well indeed, if any one is watching her; but if she thinks she is unobserved, her partiality for its contents overcomes her, and she transfers them from the shell to her own mouth. Last year, we were attempting to hatch and rear two or three settings of eggs of a very rare and peculiar kind of ducks, and Miss Beauty, who had some family matters of her own to attend to at the time, was locked up in the inclosure where their pond is. Every morning the two or three nests were regularly empty, and suspicion fell on every one about the place in his turn. Old Charlie, my handy man, got particular injunctions to watch the place well, because, as I said to him, it must be some one about the place, as Beauty would never let a strange thief get in. The place was accordingly watched, and at length Charlie came and said he had caught the delinquent. This was none other than the gardener's boy; about whom, however, an elaborate alibi was set up immediately, and attested beyond the possibility of doubt. I then determined to watch the nests myself, and, putting an egg in one of them, I withdrew to a room in the house, having a window which overlooked the scene. After waiting an hour or so, I saw Beauty come out of her kennel, go sniffing

about the place till she came to the nest with the egg in it. She looked surprised to see it there, gave a hasty look round, to see that no one was looking, and bolted it shell and all. I confess this was too much for me; I went down, armed with a whip, and gave her a sound flogging. I expressed to her my surprise that she who had been placed there partly as a custodian of the eggs against rats, &c. should have so degraded her trust; and upon my word, I think she knew what I said to her. We never lost another egg. Indeed, so anxious did she become about their safety, that she began scraping holes all round the pond—old rat-holes, which I had stopped up. At length she so tore the ground at the roots of a willow which hung over the pond, that I held a consultation with Charlie as to the advisability of putting her elsewhere. Next morning, however, that functionary came to me before breakfast, and said: 'I've found out what Beauty's a scratching at, sir; there's a weasel in the 'ole, sir, right underneath that 'ere willow; but she can't get at it, sir, on account of them roots.' I seed it this morning; and if we don't get it, sir, we shan't have many young ducks.' It was true; and Beauty accepted an apology for having been suspected of mischief.

At my feet, just now, alongside of Beauty, lies a bijou little black-and-tan English terrier, weighing about five pounds, and answering to the name of Mid—short for Semiramide—which name was playfully given to it as being the first one we could think of which, spelled in large capitals, was considerably larger than itself. In the lawn, at a respectful distance from Bob, and ever and anon trotting off to see what is going on in the stable, dozes Gyp, a very pure little Dandie, about whom a thousand stories might be told. Mop is near him; she is a French poodle, and her likeness to that stable implement gave her the name. And at the end of the group, basking in the sun, and dreaming of goodness knows what, lies a handsome St Bernard of enormous size. She came to me quite a puppy, and received the name of Buda, because in her growing days her appetite was so dreadfully large that I could think of no title more appropriate than that which serves for a capital of Hungary. But, handsome and docile and intelligent as Buda is, she never has had, and never will have, the same position in our domestic arrangements that Bob and Beauty have. 'The dog alone,' says the writer of a charming article on the Dog, in an old *Quarterly Review*, 'of all the brute creation, shews a perfect attachment, alone understands our wishes, adapts himself to our habits, waits upon our commands, associates with us as a friend.' This is true of dogs in general, but I think of sporting dogs in particular, and of retrievers in the highest degree. After them comes the shepherd's dog. The Newfoundland, the St Bernard, the Mastiff, are all exceedingly sagacious, but they lack that refining touch which a good education gives even to dogs. The collie-dog, with his homely teaching, does wonderful things, no doubt, and is both an assistant and a dear friend to the simple shepherd, his master; but he has not that polish which makes a man or a dog at home in any society. Beauty, for instance, without any training at all, is a first-rate sheep-dog, and will bring the few sheep in the plantation to order, whenever they are encroaching on the young trees. But I do not think that any but a very exceptional

sheep-dog could be got, without any training, to point, carry game, 'down charge,' and so forth, as Bob did in his infancy. Poor old Bob and little Beauty! They have made many a long trip with me over hill and dale, in summer and in winter; and many a pleasant memory do I have, and so I have little doubt have they, as I sit in the library of a winter's night, and they lie snoring at my feet.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

FOR them who like to anticipate pleasure, profit, or instruction, there will be gratification in reading the particulars of the Annual International Exhibition for the present year. We are promised a display of appliances used by civil engineers, architects, and builders, including the ingenious contrivances by which labour is saved, or results are multiplied. In association with these are cement and plaster works, sanitary apparatus, and scientific inventions and new discoveries, which seem to open a way for every kind of ingenuity. Of grates, stoves, and other contrivances for heating, all in actual operation, there will be a large show; and we may reasonably hope that, among the competitors, some will demonstrate perfect economy of coal with the amplest amount of warming. Saddlery, harness, and leather-work generally are to appear, including (as we may suppose) bookbinding—a good opportunity for any one who is not a mere imitator. Among manufactures, lace is to have a prominent place; the fine arts are to be represented; foreign countries are to exhibit their handicraft, as in former years; and, not least, there is to be a grand display of foreign wines. The samples will be stored in the spacious cellars underneath the Albert Hall. The notices to exhibitors are already published; and soon after these lines appear in print, the delivery of articles at South Kensington will commence.

It has often been said that man is more interested in mankind than in anything else; and it is admitted that the most attractive parts of museums are those containing specimens of the arts, industry, manners, and customs of ancient or existing nations. It happens, too, in the progress of civilisation, that some 'savage' nations are improved off the face of the earth, and leave no memorial. For these and other reasons, the Commissioners have resolved that the ethnology and geography of the British dominions, in all parts of the world, shall form part of this year's Exhibition, and be repeated year by year, until the whole empire shall be illustrated; and these collections are to remain as a permanent exhibition. In the words of the official notice, they are, to include 'life-size and other figures representing the aboriginal inhabitants in their ordinary and gala costumes, models of their dwellings, samples of their domestic utensils, idols, weapons of war, boats and canoes, agricultural, musical, and manufacturing instruments and implements, samples of their industries,

and in general all objects tending to shew their present ethnological position and state of civilisation.' If such a collection as is here sketched could be properly classified, its value to science, as well as to the arts, would be so great as to justify any amount of labour in its preparation. The undertaking is to be led off with Western Africa, as that country happens to be for the moment unusually interesting.

It is predicted that the task of civilising Africa will fall to England. From Cape Colony, Englishmen are pushing their way up to the equator; and from Egypt it seems likely that they will push their way down to the equator, and there meet and spread their love of fair-play to east and west. But all concerned will do well to remember that in this civilising kingdom of ours more than twenty million gallons of spirits were drunk in nine months (January to September) of 1873, and we do hope it will be found possible to civilise Africa without this element.

A curious fact was mentioned at a meeting of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Chemical Society. Some five years ago, one of the great blast furnaces at Jarrow, when tapped in the usual way, poured forth nothing but slag. This was a surprise and disappointment, for iron had been put in, and iron ought to have flowed out. Repeated trials were made, but always with the same barren result, until at last the furnace was left to cool, after which it again became productive. Last year the furnace was pulled down, and then the mystery was explained. The original bottom of the furnace had melted in the intense heat; the molten iron ran down and melted the clay in which the foundations were dug, and in the cavity thus formed a solid mass of iron weighing one hundred and twenty tons was discovered. This was the iron that should have flowed out at the tap-hole. It had to be extracted in a more troublesome way, and was blown to pieces by dynamite.

Dynamite is a mixture of that dangerous explosive nitro-glycerine and clay. The clay is a peculiar kind, called Kieselguhr by the Germans, and is found in prodigious deposits near Lüneburg. It is described as nearly pure silica, consisting of shells of infusoria of past ages. The explosive force is amazing. Nine ounces fired on the top of a block of iron two feet six inches long and one foot six inches thick, split it completely in two. Another advantage of dynamite is, that it is not affected by damp, and can therefore be used for explosions under water.

The application of diamonds to mechanical purposes still progresses: we have in former pages noticed the stone-boring machine and stone-carving machine, and now another American inventor has started a diamond sawing-machine for cutting stone. The saw is hung in the usual way; the blade is of steel, but at intervals along this blade the diamonds are set in what are called 'cutter-blocks.' In actual work, it is found necessary to

give a peculiar movement to the saw: (1) a forward motion, which makes the cut; (2) a lifting motion, which takes the saw back to its starting-place without dragging out the diamonds; (3) a feeding motion, which lowers the saw to the proper place for making a new cut; and all these are susceptible of modification, according as the stone to be sawed is hard or soft. The diamond saw requires more power to work it than the ordinary saw; but in half an hour it will cut as deeply into a hard block of stone as the ordinary saw in half a day. If a diamond should by any chance become loose, it is caught in a wire-sieve, and can be reset after a little practice by any intelligent workman.

Ornamental iron-work can now be cut with a saw, in the same manner as fret-work. The saws are driven by steam, and they leave the edges of the iron clean and sharp without filing. Specimens were exhibited at a recent meeting of the Institute of British Architects. The process, which is described as inexpensive, is the invention of a mechanist in Paris.

The Institution of Civil Engineers opened their session with a paper on the Construction of Modern Locomotive Engines, from which we gather that the Great Northern express engine runs upon a bogie-frame with four wheels, instead of two leading wheels, as formerly; that the cylinders are outside, and larger than any ever before made in this country, being eighteen inches diameter, with twenty-eight inches length of stroke. This engine will draw a train weighing three hundred and fifty-six tons along a level at forty-five miles an hour, with a consumption of twenty-seven pounds of coal per hour. The cost of maintenance and renewal is estimated at twopence-halfpenny a mile for all the miles travelled by the engine. On the North-western line the cost is less than a penny a mile; on one of the Indian lines it amounts to more than threepence. The bogie-frame facilitates the passing over curves; and on engines with rigid frames a simple yet ingenious slide fitted to the axle-boxes allows the wheels to move sideways whenever the line makes a curve, and thus the engine is more likely to keep the track than on the old construction. These particulars of improvements which tend to promote the safety of railway travellers, will interest many readers.

Among recent patents is one for giving signals in a railway train, and for warming the carriages. Under the tender is fixed a condensed air-chamber, the pump of which can be worked by the engine or by hand. From this chamber a pipe stretches under the whole length of the train, with branches into the several compartments, where they terminate in stop-cocks. If, through any accident, the main pipe breaks, the condensed air screams loud and shrill, and warns guard and driver. The same noise is produced if a passenger opens one of the stop-cocks, and at the same time a small flag, blown out of the tube, indicates the compartment whence the alarm proceeds. For the warming, the con-

densed air is made to pass through the smoke-box, and thence to shallow chambers which form part of the carriage-floors, where they serve as foot-warmers, and heat the compartments.

A paper, 'On Auxiliary Power for Ocean Navigation,' has been read before the Institution of Naval Architects, in which the author recommends that vessels for long voyages should be sailing-ships fitted with an engine that should not burn more than a hundred tons of coal in a voyage round the world. In order not to interfere with the rate of sailing, the blades of the screw are to be made to fold close to the shaft when the engine is idle. By this means a voyage would be made at much less cost than by steam; for wind costs less than coal. The engine should be used only in calms or baffling winds. And now that the courses of the winds are better understood, the best course for a ship can be chosen. A ship has been known to sail from abreast of Kerguelen's Land to Melbourne in twelve days; and that is quick enough.

Another paper, read at the same Institution, 'On the Lowering of Boats,' will be interesting to landmen as well as sailors, considering how often the lives of passengers are sacrificed, because, in moments of danger, the boats cannot be properly lowered. The author of this paper, Mr E. J. Hill, described a plan by which one man, either on the deck of a ship or in the boat, can lower the boat on an even keel until it touches the water. The boat then immediately disengages itself from the tackles without any assistance on the man's part; and thus one great occasion of risk and difficulty is overcome. Provision is made so that the boat, while descending, cannot strike against the ship's side; and it can be hauled up as easily as it is lowered. Most sailors are agreed that the water, and the water only, should detach the boat from the lowering apparatus; and Mr Hill fully maintains that condition. It is undergoing a fair trial; for the boats of the *Challenger*, discovery-ship, and of the *Great Eastern*, are hung on his plan, of which full particulars may be read in the *Transactions* of the Institution above mentioned.

As connected with this we mention an American Self-breaking Hoisting and Lowering Machine, which can be used anywhere for the lifting or lowering of heavy weights, and is applicable to ships' boats. The inventor states that a boat laden with passengers and provisions can be raised or lowered by two men, and that it is impossible that one end should move faster than the other; which means that the boat always keeps an even keel.

Messrs Lawes and Gilbert, eminent among scientific agriculturists, have made long series of experiments on different crops, which are full of instruction for farmers generally. They have grown barley during twenty years in succession on the same land, and published the results in the *Journal* of the Royal Agricultural Society. From these we learn that an annual expenditure of less than three pounds per acre in artificial manures has yielded an average produce of six quarters of dressed

barley of good quality, and nearly a ton and a half of straw. The manures here referred to are sulphate of ammonia (Peruvian guano) and nitrate of soda; and any one who knows what farming is may easily calculate that the crop as above stated would yield a good profit.

Nearly fifty years ago, instruction in agriculture was introduced into the National Schools of Ireland; afterwards, special agricultural schools were established; these have led to the establishment of others, and now there are one hundred and fifteen in actual operation, the annual cost to the state being five pounds for each school. The number of boys under instruction is four thousand two hundred. Besides these, there are sixteen national schools which rank as model agricultural schools. Even in the remote and wild counties of the west, in Mayo and Donegal, the schools flourish, and the peasantry are finding out that cultivation is not a haphazard business, and that method and order lead to profit. In a country where there are about half a million small farmers, none of whom rents more than thirty acres, simple and sound instruction in agriculture could hardly fail to succeed. To aid in the work, an agricultural class-book was published many years ago, but has been superseded by an enlarged and comprehensive edition, of which fifty thousand copies have been sold through the national schools.

The effects of climate on agriculture can be studied with promise of highly interesting results in Ireland, owing to its remarkable climate, always moist, and never hot. Grass, and not grain, must be the staple under such circumstances. The population diminishes through emigration; grass requires but few labourers. 'A man and a dog to a thousand acres,' is an old saying in county Meath, where leagues of rich grazing-lands spread far and wide. The demand for grass is not likely to fail; for, as stated by a writer in the *Journal* above referred to, 'such a number of calves as have been reared this year (1873) in Ireland was never seen since the world began. The country positively swarms with calves.'

In one of the papers read during the present session before the Royal Society, a fact highly interesting to physiologists was made known by Professor Sanderson, of University College, London. It is, that vegetable fibre, when electrically excited, behaves in the same way as animal fibre. The learned professor's experiments were made on the leaf of *Dionea muscipula*, popularly known as Venus's Fly-trap, and the effect of the currents was identical with that observed in experiments on muscular fibre. Here we have confirmation of an oft-suggested proposition, that plant life and animal life have much in common.

Professor Williamson of Manchester, whose able researches on the fossil plants of the coal-measures have been recognised as of high value, delivered a lecture recently to the Natural History section of the Philosophical Society, in which he shewed that some of the best workers in science have been men of large business, who could only spare snatches of time for their investigation. He shewed further that much work is not to be expected from people in easy circumstances, and he remarked: 'Such facts make me very dubious as to the advantages which would arise from the special endowment of men whose sole occupation in life should be scientific inquiry.'

COULEUR DE ROSE.

WHEN Dawn first opens her sleepy eyes,
And looks drowsily over the world below,
Where the Alps tower proudly towards the skies,
A beautiful blush rests with rosy glow
On their topmost summits; the ruddy snow
Gleams rich and warm, as the shadows fade
And soften in sunshine, smiling low
'Neath the dull cold glacier, whose icy shade
Not even the noon-light may dare to invade.

In an eastern sea, where the wavelets curl
Softly and lovingly over the strand,
'Neath the self-same billow which hides the pearl,
Lies a lovely shell, such as Northern land
Ne'er chanced to imagine, nor mortal hand
Could venture to paint; for the wondrous hue
Of that tender carmine, the fairy wand
Of our mother Nature, so old, so new,
Has tinted alone 'neath the salt sea-blue.

Where the bulrush bows lowly his turbaned head,
And the fern droops soft by the streamlet's side,
Where the shallow glides lazily o'er its bed,
'Tis there that the kingfisher loves to hide
Her rose-pink eggs; there the timid bride
With loving instinct prepares her nest;
While her mate, swift skimming above the tide,
Dips his azure winglets and russet breast,
As he, arrow-like, darts on his finny quest.

Oh! full and warm is the fairy glow
Which the shell's rich colour brings out of the sea;
And pure and soft is the roseate snow,
As it glimmers on high when the shadows flee;
And the kingfisher's egg, pink as pink can be,
Is fair to behold; but a lovelier sight
Have I seen this eve, when, beneath the tree,
She gave me a rosebud, and, blushing bright
With a rosier red, whispered: 'Love! good-night!'

Next Saturday, February 7, 1874, will be commenced
a Novel, entitled

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

By the Author of *Found Dead*.

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CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 528.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'FOUND DEAD.'

CHAPTER I.—FATHER AND DAUGHTER.

'WAS Milbank at the manufactory this morning, Maggie?'

'Do you mean John or Richard, father?'

Old Mr Thorne looked up from his occupation, which was that of engraving something very neat and delicate on a steel plate, and regarded his daughter with a look that was at once tender and grave. Constant intentness on very minute work had deepened the furrows which age had made on his bald forehead, but he was not, in reality, very far advanced in life. As he removes the magnifying-glass, which, while engaged in his calling, is habitually fixed in his eye, you can see how bright and blue it is, and keen as steel.

'How should I mean *Richard* Milbank, Maggie? Even when his uncle Thurle was alive, it was rare to see him at his post; but now that death has taken the old man, and Richard's interest no longer urges him to attend to business, it is not likely that he would do so from mere duty. I meant John, of course.'

'John was at the factory as usual,' answered the girl quietly. She, too, was engaged in the same employment as her father, and apparently so wrapt in it that she did not even look up at him, though the blush that had risen to her very brow, told that what he was saying did not pass unheeded. She was of slight and graceful form, with sleek black hair and eyes, and a complexion so very delicate that it suggested delicacy of constitution. It was no wonder that it should be so, for there was little fresh air to be got at Hilton, one of our great 'centres of industry' in the midlands, and the Thornes lived in the heart of the town.

Their house was a substantial one enough, though small, and not having any appearance of a shop in its outward aspect. Mr Thorne's customers were not the general public, but he served certain master manufacturers, among others, Matthew

Thurle, now, however, lying dead at his little country-seat of Rosebank. His workshop was on the first floor, and had the aspect of a *savant's* apartment, rather than that of a mechanic; the walls being hung with scientific instruments of various kinds, and the tables strewn not only with articles of his trade, but with abstruse books, and papers full of calculations. The fact was, he was only a mechanic by necessity; by choice, he was an inventor, and, as usual, he had suffered for his ingenuity. He found it difficult, even with the help of clever Maggie, to keep his head and hers above water—or rather, at the level, which, as it was, did but barely satisfy him. It was summertime, and the window of the back-room was opened wide, and revealed a sort of arbour, built upon the leads without, which a few inches of earth had transformed into a flower-plot.

'You look pale, Maggie, darling; come out into the air for a few minutes; I want to speak to you.' The old man stepped out into this improvised garden, which, though bright with sweet-smelling blossoms, commanded no better view than the backs of houses like their own, and a broad black space immediately beneath it, across which flashed, many times in every hour, with a roar and a rattle that shook the street, the trains of the London and Hilton Railway. It took a great deal of Maggie's spare time to cleanse this little Eden from the 'blacks' and other defilements which the iron horse thus cast upon it; but with the help of a little hand-engine, constructed by her father himself, she contrived to do so. The garden on the leads was the wonder of the neighbourhood, and especially its arbour, over which the creepers had been so skilfully trained that it formed a very tolerable bower, secure from prying eyes. Here Mr Thorne took his seat; and after a minute or two, during which she employed herself in

methodically putting away her work—whether from force of habit, or in order to gain time to marshal her thoughts in readiness for the coming interview—his daughter joined him.

'When you were away, lass, this morning, I received an invitation to Mr Thurle's funeral. Did John speak of it, when you saw him at the factory?'

'No, father; not a word.' Her tone was cheerful, considering the subject of which she spoke; and her air was one of relief, as though she had expected him to broach some topic more unwelcome.

'That was strange too,' continued the old man, 'since it was he himself who sent me the invitation.'

'Then I think he ought not to have done so,' returned Maggie quickly. 'It was taking too much upon himself. It was taking for granted—for one thing—that his elder brother would be disinherited, and that he would be his uncle's heir.'

'Nay, nay; you do John wrong—as you often do, Maggie. He wrote in his brother's name as well as his own; and there was no assumption at all about it. He did not say so; but my impression is Richard would have nothing to do with the matter at all. There is nothing more to be got from his uncle now; he has done his worst towards him, whatever it is; and Richard will not be at the pains to shew respect for his memory.'

'That is not to be expected, father: Richard Milbank is not a hypocrite, whatever his faults may be.'

'Whereas, John is.—Is that what your words imply?' asked the old man sharply. 'In the case of any other girl,' he continued, 'since she did not reply, I should have expected no better judgment. John is too hard-working, too serious, too ascetic even (I grant that), not to suggest such a suspicion to light and frivolous natures; but I had hoped you were more clear-sighted. I know he is thought ill of by many men, too, because he has become a teetotaler.'

'That cannot be my reason, father, since I am a teetotaler myself,' answered Maggie with a faint smile.

'You know what I mean well enough, my dear. It is one thing not to drink wine or spirits, and another to take an oath never to do so. John has taken the oath—in the case of any other man in his position, I should say, has foolishly done so. But he has been peculiarly situated; he has had an example before him such as might have driven any man to such a step.'

'I know that Richard takes more than is good for him, father,' observed Maggie coldly; 'you need not tell me that.'

'More than is good for him! My darling child, you little know what wretchedness and ruin are hidden beneath that simple phrase. He is a drunkard: you may gloze it over as you will. Unless a miracle takes place, he will become—it is only a question of time—a hopeless, incurable sot. I would spare you if I could.—You shake your head, and smile! Why, Heaven help me! do you suppose that I am wounding your tender heart with words like these, to please myself? It is because I am your father—the being who loves you better far than his own self and all the world beside—that I am telling you the bitter truth.

The surgeon's knife must needs cut deep as the disease.'

'You were saying that John has become a teetotaler from beholding the spectacle of Richard's unhappy falling,' observed Maggie evasively. 'I say, that was not the reason, father. He was not tempted to drink, and therefore needed no such protection for himself. He took the oath, that it might come to his uncle's ears, and contrast him favourably with his brother, in the old man's eyes—though he needed not to do so, since he knew himself to be the favoured one already.'

'You evade the question, Maggie! By blackening John—most cruelly and most unjustly too; but that is nothing to the purpose: even if John were as black as you would make him, that would not make Richard white. Listen to me, Maggie—listen, for it may be for the last time!'

A distant thunder from afar had grown and grown while he was speaking, till it began to roar about them; the earth began to shake, the air to quiver, and presently the down express dashed close beneath them, and was swallowed in the neighbouring tunnel with a roar and a thud.

'Heavens!' continued the old man, pointing with his finger to where the wreaths of steam were curling about the tunnel's mouth, 'I would as soon you should lay yourself in the path of yonder screaming fiend, and be crushed by it, as that you should marry Richard Milbank. You see his faults, you think, and hope to cure them. That is how good women fling themselves after lost men, and are lost with them. I know the world well, Maggie, and believe me that is a hopeless venture. A man who at twenty-five has taken habitually to drinking—whose habits are idle—whose associates are wicked and debased—whose own fair fame has been foully smirched and blotched'—

'By whom, father?' cried the girl, rising suddenly from her seat, and speaking with intense energy. 'Do you count the report of mischief-makers and scandal-mongers as proof of the fact—for what else is there to prove it?'

'Common-sense, Maggie. Look you—would you break off with this fellow, if you thought he had really done what rumour taxes him with? Or would you take him for your husband still, even as a felon?—You would not? Then you are not utterly mad, as I had feared. Well, I will prove his guilt, then.' He held up one supple hand, and, with the forefinger of the other, checked off on it his facts and arguments. 'The circumstances are these. An old man is lying on what is supposed to be his death-bed in a lonely house. There is a deaf housekeeper in the kitchen (the sick-nurse being gone home to her cottage for half an hour, as usual, to take her evening meal), and not a soul beside under that roof. A man with a mask on his face, and otherwise disguised, comes with pistol in hand into the room, and compels the dying man to sign—some deed; he knows not what; he only sees the words *eight hundred pounds* above the place where he is forced to set his signature. This wretch departs, having gained his object—and without taking with him a single article of value, of which there are many about the house. He was certainly, therefore, no common thief. Who was he, then? Who could possibly derive any benefit from such an outrageous act? One of two persons only it must have been—the rich man's nephews. The younger

of these had already, as was generally supposed, been made his heir; no deed could make him better off than he was already.

'I never said John Milbank did it, father!' observed Maggie quietly.

'My darling, let me finish: I am using that method of ratiocination which is called the exhaustive process, and I must have time. Of course, you never said so, nor did anybody else. John Milbank was in his proper place at the factory, as a dozen witnesses could prove at that particular time; but he was not even suspected, for the reason I have already given. On the other hand, Richard Milbank was *not* in his proper place, nor at any place of which he could give a satisfactory account at the period in question. It is true that nothing came of it, for, as it happened, Mr Thurle rallied, and lived for some months afterwards, during which he is said to have executed a fresh will. But the man who obtained his signature by force counted on his immediate decease, no doubt, and indeed he was almost the cause of it. Moreover, that man knew the ways of the house, and the hour at which the sick-nurse was wont to leave her charge; and he also knew—mark this!—that eight hundred pounds was exactly the sum at that time standing to Mr Thurle's credit at his banker's. Now, who but two men in all the world could have commanded such opportunities of knowledge; and who but one man in all the world had the motive for committing such an action?' Here Mr Thorne brought one palm down upon the other sharply, in token that the speech for the prosecution was concluded, while, 'Gentlemen of the jury,' his face seemed to say, 'you will surely give your verdict of "Guilty" without moving from your box.' In this, however, he was mistaken.

'You talk of motive, father,' pleaded Maggie, shaping letters on the sanded floor with her little foot; 'but what motive could Richard have in committing this crime, when he must have known that any deed that he might compel Mr Thurle to sign would, without the signature of a witness also, be mere waste-paper?'

'Ah, you know that,' responded the engraver quickly, 'because you have had to do with papers and parchments all your life, and can engross as well as any attorney's clerk in England. But an ignorant man like Richard Milbank might not have known it. Moreover, as to witnesses, he might find a peck of them, after the event, among his unprincipled friends. Do you think Dennis Blake, for example, would not put his hand to any deed or document whatever for a five-pound note? Ay, though it were one that sold his soul! No, Maggie. Your defence has broken down, and is none the better, let me add (as I heard a judge once say), for the reflections that you have cast upon another person.'

There was a long silence. Herbert Thorne looked pale, and older by a year or two in that short hour, for he knew that he had not carried his point on a vital question. He was not only possessed of considerable scientific knowledge, but was in many respects a wise man. He had seen from the first the hopelessness of using any stronger measures against his daughter's passion for Richard Milbank than persuasion. If she would not give way to him, pleading as a father with right and reason on his side, she would certainly

not have yielded to commands which could not be enforced. Maggie was of age, and quite competent to earn her own living by her pen; not as an authoress, indeed, but as a transcriber of manuscripts for the press—as an engrosser—as an engraver—and also as a painter of photographs: she had shewn her neatness and dexterity in all these walks, and to some purpose. There were, in short, two skilled mechanics in that house. He was right, then, in using persuasion only; nor was he to be blamed for putting before his daughter the true character of the dissolute man on whom she had set her heart. Where Herbert Thorne was wrong was in praising John Milbank, whom he would have had her choose for her husband, at the expense of his brother—in exalting him, as it were, upon the ruins of that broken man. She resented this as only a woman can, and it made her cling to the ruins.

Father and daughter sat in silence for many minutes, during which another train—this time London-bound—rushed out from the tunnel, and roared past them. While the noise was still at its height—'Did I not hear the bell ring?' inquired the engraver, to whom the greater sound was so familiar as almost to pass unnoticed.

'Yes, father; it is Richard,' was the quiet reply.

The old man rose from his seat with a hopeless look. That she should know his very ring, seemed to convince him that her love was fixed indeed upon this good-for-nothing.

'Do you know what he is come for, Maggie?' said he bitterly. 'He is come to ask you to marry him, because he knows that to-morrow he will be a beggar!' With that he walked hastily into the room, and thence up-stairs, only just in time to avoid the expected visitor.

CHAPTER II.—WRITTEN IN THE SAND.

Maggie rose, as if to follow her father, and avoid the coming interview; but while she stood in doubt, a quick step was heard in the inner room, at which the colour rose in her white cheeks, and her bosom rose and fell tumultuously, in spite of the hand with which she strove to repress it.

'Why, Maggie, I thought you had flown!' cried an eager voice; 'and yet, where should my pretty bird be found but in her garden!'

The speaker was a young man of five-and-twenty or so, and strikingly handsome; he was of medium height, and somewhat robustly made—the sort of figure which, unless its possessor is careful in his habits, is sure to develop into corpulency; his face, too, though fair and comely, was of that florid hue which soon grows to a deeper tint than would be chosen by a painter to depict even the healthiest complexion; his voice, though distinct enough, had already acquired that roughness which is associated with the constant use of stimulants. But his hair, which was brown, and soft, and curling, and eyes blue and tender as the summer sky, might have suited Apollo himself.

Maggie was not in the arbour now, but standing in the sunlight, with, for aught Richard Milbank knew to the contrary, a hundred pair of eyes regarding her from the surrounding houses, and yet, had she permitted him, this audacious young fellow would have kissed her then and there. She stepped back, however, from his embrace, and

held her hand out, not so much in greeting, as to keep him at a respectable distance.

'Why, Maggie, darling, what's the matter?' inquired the visitor, a little discomfited by this rebuff. 'Come into the arbour here, and tell me why you look so cruel.'

'I can tell you here, Richard, quite as well,' answered Maggie, as coldly as she could. Apollo had already dazzled her; in spite of those recent warnings, and of her own resolve, made but a minute ago, that she would *not* be dazzled. She had but just determination left to decline his invitation into the arbour, in which retreat she knew he would have got the better of her at once.

'I am not cruel, Richard, nor even cross; but I am much displeased to see you in coloured clothes, with the only relative but one you have on earth lying dead in his coffin.'

'I am sorry it frets you, Maggie, but I can't wear black for a man like Uncle Thurlie, who had never a good word for me, nor a good wish.'

'Don't say that, Richard, for I'm sure it is not true,' answered the girl rebukefully. 'His manner may have been unpleasant to you'—

'Yes, it was!' broke in the other with a contemptuous laugh.

'But he certainly did not wish you ill; far from it. If he could have seen you more diligent in business, and dutiful, and steady'—

'I beg your pardon; I thought I was addressing Maggie Thorne,' interrupted the young man apologetically; 'instead of which, it is her father, it seems, who is giving me one of his admirable lectures.'

'It would have been better for you to have listened to them, Richard; but you will listen to nobody.'

'Yes, I will, Maggie; I will listen to *you*—when you are speaking, that is, in your own proper person; and what is more, I will obey you.'

'Then you will get mourning for your uncle's funeral to-morrow, and wear it.'

'To hear is to obey, Maggie; it shall be done. I know an establishment at which discreet young men deal for ready-money, where ready-made clothes are to be bought. I will go, not to its "mitigated grief department," but to its most inconsolable woe ditto, and furnish myself with a suit of sables. It will go against the grain with me, I promise you, but it shall be done. The length of my hatband and the depth of my weepers shall shame John himself. If crocodiles' tears could be purchased, I would even shed them, to please you, but I have reason to believe that my brother has bought up the entire stock.—It was about to-morrow that I have come to speak to you, Maggie,' added the young fellow, dropping his light tone, and speaking with emotion. 'In four-and-twenty hours, my fate, you know, will be decided.'

'Indeed, I do not know it, Richard. Men's fates are decided for them, as I believe, by their own conduct, else what would be the use of fighting *against* fate! Supposing even that your uncle should leave you nothing'—

'A very reasonable supposition indeed, Maggie. That is, I suspect, exactly what he has left me—bating some excellent advice, and perhaps a shilling to buy a rope with, or a razor.'

'I say, even in that case, there is no need to despair of your future, Richard,' continued the girl firmly. 'You have youth, and health, and

wit enough, though you waste it on flippant jokes.'

'It is her father!' mused the young man gravely. 'That is his style beyond dispute, yet I never saw a man with such a pretty foot.'

'Richard, you are incorrigible!' cried Maggie, beating the praised foot upon the gravel impatiently; 'and I have half a mind to dismiss you altogether from my heart.'

'If you have half a mind to keep me there, that is all I can hope for,' answered the other penitently, 'and a great deal more than I deserve. O Maggie,' cried he, throwing out his arms, and speaking with passionate energy, 'do you suppose I am blind to what I am and to what you are! Do I need your father's arguments, or any man's, to convince me of the ruin that I have brought upon myself by my own folly! It is the consciousness of all that, that makes advice and reproof intolerable to a fellow like me. What is the use of crying over spilt milk? What can the most reckless do, beyond giving his honour not to spill any more? I do give it—I come here to give it—not to your father, who once told me he would not believe me on my oath—but to *you*! I come to throw myself on your mercy'—they were in the arbour now, for he had seized her hand and drawn her thither, and she had not resisted. 'I have erred, and sinned; yes, sinned, my girl, beyond anything that your pure heart can dream of; but I repent me of it all. The confession is humiliating enough, and you will not make it more bitter, as others would do.'

'Heaven knows I will not make it more bitter, Richard,' sighed Maggie, keeping him at arm's-length still, and averting her eyes from his pleading face.

'But is this remorse genuine—is this true?' you would say, interrupted the other eagerly. 'It *is* true—it *is* genuine! I have made a false start in life; or, rather, I have gone the wrong side of the post, Maggie, and lost the race that way; but all this may yet be retrieved. If I had some one to love me, and to guide me, I am sure it would be retrieved. Your wise head would keep me straight; your loving arms would restrain me from evil ways. I don't know what will happen to-morrow. The old man may have relented at the last, and done me justice. If so, so much the better for us both. But if not, I have still enough to take us both across the seas—to America.'

'What! and leave my father? Never!' She drew herself back from him at the bare thought. Then her father's parting words recurred to her remembrance: 'He is come to ask you to marry him because he knows that to-morrow he will be a beggar;' and she once more relented towards her lover: he was incapable of a baseness, and she seemed to owe him a reparation for having listened to a suggestion to the contrary.

'You love your father, then, more than me!' cried Richard.

'I wish I did,' thought Maggie bitterly.

'Why should these old people for ever cross the path of youth?' continued the young man vehemently. 'If my uncle would have permitted us to marry, all would have been well; and now your father is the obstacle.—Don't be frightened, Maggie' (for his passion was terrible to witness, and she shrank before it); 'it is my love for you that makes me wild. I came to-day to ask you to be my wife, because I had so great a trust in your love that I

thought, "Even at this lowest ebb of my fortunes, she will not refuse me."

She shivered, and sighed, and shut her eyes. If women had been the chief customers of the house of Thurlie & Co. Richard Milbank would have been the best man of business in that establishment, instead of the worst. He knew well that with a girl such as Maggie Thorne, his very misfortunes would be the most eloquent pleaders for him.

"It is not much, indeed, that I have to offer you, Maggie," he went on; "perhaps nothing beyond a loving heart and these willing hands. They shall henceforth, however, work diligently for you, dearest, if you will let them. They shall be your bread-winners, if bread is to be won."

"I am not afraid of starving, Richard," replied the girl, with a touch of pride. "It is not the fear of *that* which would deter me from becoming your wife."

"What, *then*?" inquired he quickly. "Is it the fear of my breaking my good resolutions? Will you not trust me? Will you not believe me?"

"I believe you, Richard: I am sure you mean what you say."

"But you would have proofs? I had thought that true love was more confiding," his tone was sorrowful, and full of tender pleading, but the glance which accompanied it, and fell upon her down-drooped face, was impatient, disappointed, angry even. "Well, what matters?" continued he. "It is not as if I had come to say: 'Will you marry me to-morrow, Maggie?'" I only ask from you the assurance that you will be mine. Then, whatever chance of fortune happens, I shall be content. Whatever may be lost, I shall still have won. My own dear darling Maggie, tell me that you will one day be mine!—You do not answer," cried he, drawing her closer towards him; "but your silence speaks for you as sweetly as any words. On the ground yonder I read your answer, too, which was written before I put the question." He pointed to the sanded floor, on which, as she had sat by her father's side, she had mechanically traced the letters of her lover's name—R. M. "May I take my happiness for granted, love? Your cheek is white, but I will change this lily to a rose." So saying, he pressed his lips to hers, and she, with a low soft cry, half-sigh half-sob, returned his kiss. And thus they plighted faith. He would have repeated the pleasant ceremony, but that she withdrew from his passionate embrace.

"Go, Richard go!" cried she. "I have done your bidding; your fate and mine are henceforth one; but you must leave me now."

"I am your slave, dear Maggie, now and for ever, and must obey you. For the present, then, good-bye. To-morrow may have good news in store for us, after all."

"Do not count upon it, Richard. Nor is it riches, even if you should be rich, that will make you happy."

"I know it, Maggie; for, rich or poor, I am now sure of happiness. But if the old man has relented, it may be realised at once. Think of that, sweet heart. And meanwhile, good-bye, my own, my very own!"

With a kiss snatched from her forehead, for she had covered her face with her hands, he left the harbour, and the next minute she heard the front-door close behind him. He was gone, and had

taken her heart with him; yet well she knew it was not in safe keeping.

Her eyes fell upon those two tell-tale letters upon the ground, and she erased them slowly, and reluctantly, with her foot.

"Vows written in sand," sighed she. "It is an evil omen. I have done wrong; yet how could I do otherwise? O Richard, Richard! I have given myself to you, in spite of my own heart's foreboding; do not betray my trust."

A WORD ON FISH-HATCHING.

SOME remarkably successful efforts have lately been made for the artificial propagation of fresh-water fish, such as the salmon and trout—the most remarkable of all such attempts being the export of the ova of these fish to Australia and Van Diemen's Land, wherewith to stock certain rivers in these distant colonies. Strange as it may appear at first sight, there is scarcely more difficulty in hatching salmon and trout than in hatching chickens. We remember seeing a public exhibition of a great system of hatching hundreds of chickens from eggs by a proper adjustment of heat; the only real difficulty in the affair being the rearing of the young creatures after they had left the shell. In comparison with this process, that of bringing swarms of fish to life, and seeing them fairly out into the world, is less precarious. All that need be done is to be careful and use the best means. It is of this we are going to speak. Lately, we made a few observations on the great value of the British sea-fisheries; and there seems little reason to doubt that, under conditions to be mentioned, our river-fisheries might be made productive of a vast deal more than they are in the present hap-hazard style of things. Whether it would be worth while to be at the trouble, will be thought of afterwards. In the meantime, let us see how the artificial hatching of fish is to be managed.

The first requisite is to have some ground near a clear running stream where a series of small ponds may be formed along with a covered building, when such can be conveniently erected. As a regular flow of water must go through the apparatus of hatching to the river, channels must be cut accordingly, and furnished with suitable sluices. The principle of hatching consists in allowing water to be continually flowing over the ova or eggs of the fish, just as this takes place at the spawning-places in rivers. Imitate nature as closely as possible, and you are all right. Some fish, such as carp, perch, and pike, will breed in ponds, and never be near a river or streamlet at all. Salmon and trout, however, must get into a running stream, up which, at the proper season, instinct impels them to swim as far as they can get, till they find a bed of gravel on which the ova of the female may be deposited, and fertilised by the milt of its male companion. Attached, glutinised, to the sand or gravel, the spawn is left to its fate. It receives no attention whatever from parents. They return down the stream, where, if caught, they are spoken of as kelts or spent fish. In due time, generally in from three to four months, the action of the running water with a proper temperature, the hatching is perfected, and the young salmon come to life, and although very small in size, swim instinctively away, to meet what fortune awaits them.

Now, it is this natural process which needs to be imitated. There must, in the first place, be some method of collecting the fertilised spawn, bringing it to the breeding-house, and there, by arrangements to be described, keeping up a continuous flow of water over it till the young make their appearance. Curious as it may seem, there is nothing new in all this. The Romans bred fish for their luxurious tables two thousand years ago; and for an indefinite length of time the practice has been carried on in a very comprehensive way by the Chinese. In modern times, in Europe, the French have taken the lead as breeders of fish, the people of this country only coming after them on a scale worth mentioning. What the Romans did, and the Chinese and French now do, can with similar appliances be surely done in the British islands, and done better, because there is no lack of capital to facilitate any good paying-branch of industry.

James G. Bertram, in his book *The Harvest of the Sea*, which we lately noticed, introduces an account of visits to two piscicultural establishments on the continent: one at Huningue, near Basle; the other at Buisse, on the south-east frontier of France. That at Huningue, he describes as a large and flourishing concern, occupying with its buildings and ponds a space of eighty acres. The suite of buildings comprise two great hatching-galleries, sixty metres long, and nine metres broad (a metre is a little more than thirty-nine inches), containing a plentiful supply of tanks and egg-boxes. These boxes, arranged in rows, with short lengths of thick glass fitted into them for reception of the eggs, are under a flow of water, which falls from one box to the other. There are tanks and basins into which the young fish are floated, but, as a general rule, fish are not bred at Huningue. The chief business is the collection, preparation, and distribution of their eggs, which are kept in a condition to be disposed of. The establishment is, therefore, as far as we can gather, a wholesale storehouse of fish ova, to supply various orders of breeders. Mr Bertram gives particulars as to the capturing of gravid fish when about to spawn; how the eggs, like so many peas, are gently pressed by the hand into basins; how on bringing the milt in contact with them, they assume a brilliant pink colour; and how they are then ready to be taken to the breeding receptacles, where they are watched with exceeding care, any particles of dust being removed by means of a camel-hair pencil. 'The applications for eggs, both from individuals and associations, are always a great deal more numerous than can be supplied. The eggs when sent away are nicely packed in boxes among wet moss, and they suffer very little injury if there be no delay in the transit.' So great is the traffic, that eggs productive of twelve fish can be sold for a penny. At Buisse, where the establishment is also on a gigantic scale, it is possible to supply 'forty to fifty thousand young trout in the year at five centimes (a half-penny) each, a result due to the care with which M. de Galbert conducts his operations.'

Allusion is made to the breeding of salmon on the Danube and other places in Germany; after which, our author describes the process pursued at Stormontfield, on the Tay, about five miles from Perth. Persons visiting the 'Fair City' ought to make a point of going to the salmon

ponds; two hours will suffice for the excursion. The egg-boxes are placed on a gentle declivity, midway between a mill-race and the Tay, the water flowing beautifully in falls from one to the other, and the young salmon being received into ponds, whence they can be discharged to shift for themselves in the Tay. 'The egg-boxes at Stormontfield, unlike those at Huningue, are in the open air, and in consequence, the eggs are exposed to the natural temperature; they take, on an average of the seasons, about 120 days to ripen into fish; that is, from November till March, or nearly four months. A woodcut is given representing a ground-plan and section of the breeding establishment, and to that, persons requiring minute details are referred. Some improvements have lately been effected, with a view to accommodate increased numbers in the ponds. As many as 500,000 eggs can now be hatched every year.

On quitting the egg, the infant salmon is sustained for a few days by a beneficent provision of nature. Attached to it is a portion of the egg, from which it is nourished till able to seek for its support in the water to which it is ushered. At Stormontfield, the young fry are fed with particles of boiled liver. 'On the last occasion of my visit,' says Mr Bertram, 'the very intelligent keeper threw a few crumbs into each of the ponds, which caused an immediate rising of the fry in great numbers. It would, of course, have been a simple plan to turn each year's fish out of the ponds into the river as they were hatched, but it was thought advisable rather to detain them till they were seized with the migratory instinct, and assumed the scales of smolthood.' By watching the development of the fry, 'it has been conclusively settled that the parr is the young of the salmon, that it becomes transformed into a smolt, grows into a grilse, and ultimately attains the honour of full-grown salmonhood.' Among the young fry, there are visibly some weak and some strong; the stronger or best fed being able to get away at the end of the first year. The sluices being kept open for their exit, they can depart as guided by instinct. It is now twenty years since the breeding system was begun at Stormontfield. 'Upwards of three millions of pond-fish have now been thrown into the river Tay, and the result has been a satisfactory rise in the salmon rental of that magnificent stream.'

Country gentlemen who have a bit of running water on their property, could easily, as Mr Bertram shews, try the experiment of artificial breeding. They could even do so without ponds, simply by a movable apparatus, resembling a table, on which a series of hatching-boxes can be arranged like the steps in a stair, with water flowing from one to the other, and escaping into a tank. There is a woodcut of such an apparatus, which could be set up in a garden, or placed in an outhouse. This enthusiastic writer adds, for general information, that he is 'able to hatch salmon eggs in the saucer of a flower-pot; it is placed on a shelf over a fixed wash-hand basin, and a small flow of water regulated by a stop-cock falls into it.' What he insists upon, however, is the establishment of breeding-ponds in all rivers frequented by salmon, so that by a comparatively small outlay, at least two millions of fish might be produced per annum, in addition to the vast

numbers that are hatched naturally in the different streams.

Here, it is necessary to bear in mind that, whatever be the quantity of young fry hatched artificially or naturally, an extraordinary large proportion never come to maturity. A full-grown female salmon is said to produce a thousand eggs for every pound of its weight, but probably not more than five per cent. of the young live to be salmon. Sir Humphry Davy calculated, that out of seventeen thousand young when hatched, not more than eight hundred arrive at maturity. This seems almost incredible; it is to be recollected, however, that the destruction of the young is not confined to the early age of the creature, but pursues it as a parr and smolt within two to three years after its birth, when sporting itself in the smaller or larger streams previous to descending to the sea, where it attains to the dimensions of a grilse. It will therefore be understood that artificial production will in no case be followed by a corresponding capture. To secure two millions additional fish, ten to twenty millions would need to be artificially hatched; about which, however, there would be no difficulty.

To the brilliant results pictured by a wide-spread scheme of hatching, there is unfortunately a serious drawback. Would the process remunerate the persons who undertook the trouble and cost of the enterprise? When a tenant-farmer breeds sheep or cattle, the young remain in his custody till they are profitably disposed of. The breeding of salmon is attended with no such consequence; the young are sent adrift, and may never be more heard of. On some rivers, such as the Tay, or the rivers in Sutherlandshire, there may be so few proprietors, that, by legal means or moral influence, they can check depredations, and divide among them pretty equally the produce of the fishings. But take the case of the Tweed, with which we happen to be acquainted, and of which a sorrowful tale can only be told, although no river has been more a pet subject of legislation. It flows through five counties, and has innumerable tributaries among the pastoral hills, to which the salmon at certain seasons instinctively proceed for spawning. From its sources to its estuary there may be two hundred owners of land, some of them noblemen with large domains, others being proprietors of only a few hundred acres or less. Among the whole, a very insignificant number near the mouth of the river catch nearly all the fish that are worth taking as they issue from the sea. The upper proprietors, though owning rights of fishing, do not get a single salmon from one year's end to the other, unless possibly one may be procured now and then by angling; the hardship to them being the greater, that it is in the rivulets on their grounds that the salmon find that accommodation for spawning without which the species would soon be extinct. We do not go into questions as to weekly and annual close time, shape of nets, or any other technicality; the sum and substance of the matter is, that the few proprietors on the lower part of the river are the sole beneficiaries. By letting their respective fishings to tenants who make a business of catching, they realise amongst them about ten thousand pounds a year. This amount of rental is not all gain. From it has to be deducted the expense of employing police to watch the river and prosecute poachers in the

county courts. Yet, with all their care in this respect, the practice of capturing salmon on their way to the spawning-grounds, or in a foul or spent state, is largely and audaciously carried on, and becomes the source of much demoralisation. Obviously, in such a condition of things, the upper proprietors can take no interest in projects for the artificial propagation of salmon; nor can they be expected to specially assist in securing fish from popular depredation, seeing that they would derive no sort of advantage from their preservation.

This is a melancholy but true view of affairs, not only as regards the Tweed, but many other rivers. Until the practice of placing fixed nets at the estuary of rivers is abolished root and branch, and also until the weirs obstructive of the free passage of fish when the water is low in summer are removed or modified, so that all along the stream can start fair, the introduction of artificial hatching on a broad scale is hopeless. Let it further be remembered, that the pollution of rivers by the sewage of towns and the refuse of manufactures has in later times materially assisted to ruin the salmon-fishings in England and Scotland; and that now many of the finest salmon that reach the markets of London, Edinburgh, Manchester, and other large seats of population, are importations from the rivers of Norway. The present dearth of this variety of food will be seen to be more due to imperfect legislation and selfishness than to natural causes. Our space prevents our treating at greater length this perplexing and debatable, but very important subject. Those who wish to pursue it further are referred to the work of Mr Bertram; also to *The Salmon*, by Alexander Russell (1864), an exhaustive treatise alike in regard to sport and the other aspects of an interesting matter of public economy.

W. C.

JAPAN AS IT WAS AND IS.

THE rapid changes which are taking place in Japan, the disruption of all the former laws and customs of society, the immense innovation signified by the emerging of the Mikado or king from his profound and sacred seclusion, and the rapid increase of our acquaintance with a country which, within the remembrance of us all, was almost mythical, lead great interest to pictures of the Japan that used to be. Ten years have done the work of centuries, in modifying all the moral, intellectual, and social aspects of the country, especially in the great cities, and first has of late fatally accelerated change by effacing the most characteristic of the ancient edifices.

Yeddo, the capital of the country, was visited in 1867 by an adventurous party of French travellers, of whom the Duc de Penthièvre and M. de Beauvoir were the most noted. The story told by these intelligent Europeans will soon have acquired the value of ancient history. They went to Yeddo while it was yet a closed city, inaccessible to foreign manufactures, and inhabited by a great number of two-sworded men, bitterly hostile to Europeans; so that the Japanese government, responsible for their safety, sent them thither under a strong escort of 'yako-nines,' who surrounded them as closely as policemen guarding prisoners, the main body (six) being preceded by a picket of four, who sternly divided

the crowd, and kept them at a distance. All along the road from Yokohama to the capital of the Taikoun, as they galloped with their escort, they noted that at the gate of every village there were four men who sat upon a mat-strewn stage, in front of a house adorned with flags, still and silent as statues, writing down the names of all the passers-by. Having crossed the Lokungo river, they reached the great 'tea-house' of Metaski, which is an epitome of the utter strangeness of things in Japan. M. de Beauvoir compares the garden to a fairy park, seen from a hill, through the big end of a telescope. A vast assemblage of dwarf shrubs, purple and dark green, spread their crooked arms over tiny lakes inhabited by red fish: lilliputian alleys meander through pigmy parterres, gutter rivers with green bridges wide enough to let a rat pass, arbours and nooks in which nothing bigger than a rabbit could find room: such were the features of this toy-garden, which was enthusiastically admired by two-sworded travellers of ferocious appearance, who were, nevertheless, very harmless; and much flattered by the surprise and curiosity evinced by the 'barbarian people.' The vigilance of these two-sworded guardians increased with the approach to Sinagawa, a suburb which had recently been burned down and rebuilt, in the bird-cage and match-box style which is so surprising to European eyes, for this is a resort of the young Japanese nobility, who are handy with their swords, and, at that time, held foreigners in great detestation. The first view of the Bay of Yeddo is very imposing, with the huge forts on the islands, and the castles of the daimios crowning the hills.

Yeddo is a city of gardens and palaces, and, with its thirty hills, is unequalled in the world. It stretches out beyond the limits of sight, like a vast park; it is built upon the sea, and a great river runs through it. The 'Siro,' or Taikoun's palace, rises in the centre like a huge citadel from wide-spreading glacis of turf, which descend to circular lakes and canals. Thirty bridges of granite unite the citadel to the City of the Princes, or 'Soto-siro,' which is quite unlike all other Japanese towns. It does not contain a single wooden house, but is built in a severe rectangular style, of white stone, and surrounded by ditches supplied with pure running water. In this immense section of the great city are the official residences of all the Japanese nobility, of the warlike daimios who are the lords and masters of the labouring population, and of the fertile plains from whence they derive immense revenues. Among the things which have passed away, is the custom that obliged all these vassals of the Taikoun to pass one year in three in the sacred city, as an act of homage to the suzerain. They came, accompanied by their harems, their officers, and their troops. What a magnificent exhibition of feudal state must that have been—which no European ever beheld—for there were eighteen daimios 'of sacred origin,' three hundred and eighty created by the Taikoun during two centuries, and nearly eighty thousand 'hattamothos,' or great captains and knights! Each man prided himself on the brilliancy of his escort and attendants; each man's suite amounted to at least nine hundred persons, and they were all lodged in the inner city, called the palace of the daimios, which must have needed all its exquisite proportion and simple arrangement to accommodate them. The

revolt of the daimios had changed all this before M. de Beauvoir's visit, and the great palace was empty. But there was plenty of stir in the city, notwithstanding; and the outside of the palaces, with their splendid ornaments and gilded blazonry, was no less imposing than there were no armed crowds within the towering gates. From Soto-siro to 'Midzi,' the commercial city, the way lies along a hillside, and between great granite walls, which inclose immense parks. Immediately above these walls are hedges, six feet wide and forty feet high, cut and trained to marvellous perfection; they are enamelled in rich colours upon their dark-green background; and whole flocks of sacred birds, white-plumaged, are always fluttering among them. It was while the travellers were lingering in this enchanted spot, reminding them of all their imaginations of the hanging-gardens of Babylon, that they witnessed one of the characteristic sights of Yeddo: one of the great princes going down to the public promenade. He was escorted by heralds in sky-blue, armed with formidable wooden swords. Then came a procession of halberdiers, battle-axemen, falconers, gentlemen-in-waiting, and pages pompously escorting the lackered 'norimon,' carried by eight men, in which His Highness sat cross-legged, a sword sticking two feet out of each window. His Highness did not deign to cast one glance upon the sacrilegious foreigners. On reaching the commercial city, they were chiefly struck by two things: first, the incomparable cleanliness of the streets, which are like the carefully tended paths of a park; and secondly, the precautions against fire. At regular intervals at all the principal points of the town, high belfries are erected, columnar in shape, which are ascended by means of ladders, and from whence the whole quarter can be minutely inspected. On the summit of each is a magnificent bronze ball wherewith to sound the alarm. In almost every house there is a wooden pump ready for use, and at intervals of fifty feet there are pyramids of water-pails with shining copper hoops, and always full of water.

The French travellers formed the third European party which had ever been admitted to visit the gardens of the Taikoun, into which they passed through the cyclopean gates of the vast fortress. It is a scene of complicated prettiness, with kiosks overlooking the sea, lakes covered with sacred birds with golden and silver plumage, thickets of purple trees; falconries, with all the curious apparatus of the lordly sport; summer-houses fitted up for music, for dancing, and for feasting, with all the fragile elegance of the highest style of Japanese art. The next great sight in Yeddo is the famous temple of Asaka, which the French travellers visited when it had the additional attraction of a fair going on in its avenues. This extraordinary place is known as the 'Sojourn of the thirty-three thousand three hundred and thirty-three divinities,' of whom one is in particular favour. He is the god of toothache. Each sufferer brings him his offering; he then chews a little ball of paper into a complete pulp, and spits it out against one of the pictures with great dexterity. He then retires, convinced that he has given the toothache to the god.

The fair was much like other fairs. We are told that a Japanese edition of Punch and Judy

was proceeding briskly; but the spectators, instead of being nurses and children, were a crowd of officers, who bore themselves with the utmost majesty of demeanour. The beauty of the streets of Yeddo never loses its charm; the fine buildings, the delicious verdure, shade, and flowers, the perfect cleanliness and total absence of squalor, the warlike and yet ornate appearance of the entire city, are always freshly pleasing; but the sense of being among a thoroughly antagonistic people grows with every day. Perhaps this is one respect in which old Yeddo has become new; when M. de Beauvoir was there, murders had been of recent occurrence, and a vague fear and distrust of the foreign influence, which, with all their community of feeling on the subject of exclusion, they were unable to resist, was fermenting among the people. The 'yakonines' had plenty to do in their protecting office; and it is evident, from the narrative, that the least departure from obedience to their instructions, the very slightest foolhardiness, would have cost the French gentlemen their lives. After much experience and many modifications, M. de Beauvoir pronounces the Japanese peasants and labourers to be a simple, truthful race, the most hospitable in the world; but the Japanese aristocracy, the dwellers in the holy city, and the towns of the interior, are blinded by a narrow pride and national fanaticism.

Irresistible forces are now being brought to bear upon this class of Japanese society, and, no doubt, the breach once made in the wall of separation will rapidly widen. The intercourse of these aristocrats with each other is very stately and ceremonious; and M. de Beauvoir recounts one interesting trait of their customs. Presents made between equals in the same society are never composed of gold or silver, nor of anything which bears commercial value. The daimios frequently exchange tokens of friendship, but they invariably consist of rare plants, brilliant flowers, or beautiful and rare fruits.

The superiority of Japanese acrobats and jugglers is sufficiently well known in Europe, but their performances in the sacred city reach a point of such marvellous perfection, that, no doubt, the masters of those arts are too well paid ever to wish to leave their own country; so that the extraordinary things we have seen done by Japanese performers here are only, in reality, second-rate performances. The services of the most accomplished jugglers are invariably engaged at all the great entertainments; and dancers are as indispensable as tea. The dancers sit on their heels, with little lacker stools before them, and play on their guitars while the serious business of the feast is in progress. Before they left Yeddo, the French travellers were entertained at a great Japanese dinner, where they saw some of those wonderful 'pièces montées,' which remind us of the curious medieval banquets of Spain and Italy. One of these, quite a square yard in size, represented a landscape to perfection: there were rivers made of shredded onions, mandarin ducks made of carved and painted turnips, green fields, and brick bridges made of earrots. Another represented fishing. On a rock built of potatoes, lost in the midst of waves of mayonnaise, and foaming with whipped whites of eggs, was perched a fisherman, hauling in a long net of turnip-peelings, filled with tiny oysters and sticklebacks. Finally, a large barbel comes forward, which has been turned into a galleon ornamented with masts, and with sails

swollen by the breeze. They ate with their chopsticks all these things, and fifty other dishes composed of potted crab and other fish, and strange mysterious sauces; and when they took leave, their hospitable host insisted on their retaining their chopsticks and paper finger-napkins as keepsakes, and also bestowed on each a pretty basket, containing a big lobster and a fish. Immediately after this entertainment, the travellers left Yeddo for Yokohama with an armed escort; and here we may drop our account of what they saw or did.

What a change on the face of affairs in Japan since the country was visited by these Frenchmen! Through the energy of the government, the most surprising reforms have been effected. Life has been rendered safe; commercial intercourse has been established; railways, electric telegraphs, and gas for lighting have been introduced. There is now also an efficient Lighthouse Department, and a government postal system, which have not been without their influence.

A scheme of general education has also been established throughout the empire. Not the least interesting thing to be mentioned regarding it is, that quantities of the school books issued by the publishers of the present *Journal*, have been imported for use of the more advanced class of pupils. A Japanese law tribunal has been established at one or two of the principal ports. A long-felt want—legislation with regard to the bankrupt estates of Japanese—has also been supplied.

Many newspapers have been started throughout the country. Yokohama boasts of a daily paper, and the freedom with which the Buddhist religion is discussed, affords ground for belief that the way is opening for the spread of Christianity. And all this the work of the last ten years!

MY FRIEND THE COLLECTOR.

You may meet a man for years, and yet never discover his peculiar tastes. You have known your friend, say, Smith, for twenty years; met him daily at the Stock Exchange, and looked upon him with respect as a steady, thoroughly solvent old customer, worth a whole box of plume at least. He goes to and fro every day by train to his snug little place in Kent. He is as sure to be seen coming out of the Cannon Street Station at five minutes past ten every morning, as the Victoria Tower clock is to strike the ten minutes after. The spectacle of such a grave and reverend citizen on horseback, you would have thought only to be equalled by that of a chimney-sweep taking the Speaker's chair the night of an important debate. Yet, if you were to meet Smith in a hunting county, you would see him mounting a blood-horse at daybreak, and going over rasps and switches, and bullfinches and five-barred gates—in a word, cutting down the whole field. On further investigation, you would probably find he had been a jockey-boy in early life. Then there is Brown—sour, sly old Brown of the Chafe Wax Office, a dry, crusty old fellow obsequious to the heads of departments, a Pharos and Tamerlane to all beneath him; a sort of man the very sight of whom curdles the blood of even that junior clerk of the Chafe Wax Office, who is just married to a beauty and a fortune, and who was singing like a canary the moment before old Brown thrust in his ugly withered old phiz. Brown is not exactly the man whom you would

credit with a tender heart and inflammable blood; yet, in his youth, when he was in the navy, we were told yesterday, he boarded a Malay vessel, which had carried off a rajah's daughter, cut down three Malays, but fell at last stabbed by a poisoned crease. The rajah's daughter, at this juncture, escaping from the hold, where she had been covered with bales of Persian shawls, flew upon deck, and, kneeling, applied her beautiful lips to Brown's wound— But there; the story is too affecting. Suffice it to say that that withered old bachelor of the Chafe Wax Office, the dread of cabmen, the terror of club pages, the horror of omnibus-drivers, was once the very genius of romance and love personified.

The feeling of surprise with which the reader has perhaps discovered such anomalies, was strong on me when, the other day, I entered the Salamander Insurance Office in Lizard Court, Crutched Friars, and discovered my old friend, Whinbush, the medical officer of the Society, sitting at his official desk exactly opposite a large, erect, pot-bellied, stuffed gorilla, and smiling blandly at his petrified grimaces. On his right hand was a small black bear from Tibet; on his left, stood a snarling leopard, with a few other oddities.

'Didn't you?' replied he, dry as snuff; and his driest manner is very dry. 'Been all my life at it. Here's the catalogue of my collection.' And he fluttered before me a folio manuscript catalogue of some forty or fifty pages. 'More than a shelfful, isn't it?'

I replied that it certainly was, and that a few dozen such animals would fill up a small house. 'I suppose you have to vault over those creatures,' I said, 'every night before you can even get into bed?'

Brabazon looked at me over his spectacles, and admitted, with a dry smile, that he had pretty well choked himself up with his collection.

'But how did you contrive to collect all this?'

'Scraped it together by degrees, when I was house-surgeon at St Lazarus. Many of the young fellows went abroad, and sent me home odd things; some I got by exchange with other collectors. Yes; it grows, it grows. But' (here Brabazon rose from his chair with firmness and decision, and buttoned tighter his surcoat) 'you must come and see it. Now; no putting off.'

'Can't to-day; I have an appointment.'

'Well, to-morrow; 5 P.M. I shall ask Strongitharm and one or two more to see it too. Strongitharm is anxious to take some notes of one or two odd things in it for the *Sea and Air*, which he edits. Mind—five sharp.'

Here Brabazon, having secured his prey, relapsed into official life, buttoned his coat up to several degrees more of intensity, and plunged into acturaries' statistics, entirely forgetful of my presence, which was his way, especially just before Board days.

I was true to my appointment the next day. I found the place to be an old brick manor-house, hidden away among mean streets, not far from the Surrey Gardens. In the spacious entrance-hall, the moment a neat servant opened the door, I saw evidences of Whinbush's taste. A fine suit of fluted armour, *temp.* Henry VII. was staring across the hall at a suit of damascened armour of a century later, both suits leaning forward in that helpless Guy Fawkes' manner that so often gives the

dummy figure in armour a look of inebriety. From the fact of finding a well-dressed M.P.-ish middle-aged man taking off his gloves in the hall, and another gentleman of a West-end type walking round the fluted suit, as if to discover some possible defects in the back, I concluded that the other visitors had arrived, and that these were of them.

Whinbush was soon with us; and by the time we had ascended the stairs into a spacious room running the whole length of the house, and crowded with curiosities from ceiling to floor, on both sides, and down the middle, and got well into the skull of a whale, Strongitharm had arrived. He was a short, thick-set man, with arms that would have grappled a bear, and a clever, good-humoured face, radiant with a careless jollity, that at first glance rather indicated the captain of an Indian-man, than an acute, energetic, practical man of science. With a ship-at-sea walk, and a smile that made you at once at home, he was soon introduced all round; and we went straight at a curious case containing a Japanese mermaid, and a sham skeleton of a dwarf from the same ingenious but not well-principled country.

'There, Mr Strongitharm,' said Whinbush, folding his arms statuesquely, with an air of cynical triumph; 'you have written on those things in *Sea and Air*—now, what do you make of that skeleton of a dwarf?'

I think Strongitharm was posed. He eyed it from all sides, and threw himself into various distorted perspectives, still with the same droll look of hearty nautical wonder and enjoyment of odd things peculiar to him.

'It's a queer thing,' he said, after a pause. 'Well, I take it to be the sham skeleton of a dwarf, manufactured by some Japanese dodge or other. Oh, I know 'em!'

'I thought I'd puzzle you,' said Whinbush triumphantly. 'Well, I'll tell you. The ribs and body are made of papier-mâché, and the legs are the legs of a toad straightened. And that skeleton next the little man, is a large toad of the kind from which the little man's legs were made.'

'Do you remember the big Surinam toad in the Hunter Museum?' said Strongitharm, with his own special unction. 'Such a fellow—as large as a cheese-plate!'

Whinbush said he did, and he was a fellow indeed.

We were all soon buried in a huge cabinet of African treasures—round bits of wood for cleaning savages' teeth, necklaces of dogs' teeth, and brass cooking-pans of all descriptions. From these Whinbush diverted us at a tangent to a squat figure, clothed in hemp armour, from the South Seas. A remarkable warrior this—covered with woven or plaited cording, that resembled cocoa-nut door-mats. A broad girdle of it surrounded his waist; he wore a kilt of it; in fact, he was all over door-mats; and on his head was a conical helmet, made from the skin of some spiked fish. A grotesque warrior he looked in his oakum-picking armour, like a convict armed for a first-class hunting.

'Madagascar spears,' said Strongitharm, knowingly tapping three or four painted wooden spears of a most unserviceable character, that hung beside a huge blow-pipe (fourteen feet long, from the Amazon). 'I never could make out what those

were for. Old Raikes had some of them. Fishing, perhaps!

'Hein!' said Whinbush; which meant yes or no, as you choose to take it.

'By Jove! here's a fellow,' said Strongitharm, pointing to a hideous squat fetich, half-way up the wall—a monster of diabolical aspect, with green eyes, an enormous nose, a tusk-projecting chin, and a crown of large lustrous shells. 'Who is he like?' (here Strongitharm reflected)—'There's some M.P.—Who is it, Whinbush? You've seen him in that thing—in *Vanity Fair*.'

'Take care,' said I; 'there may be a member of the House present.'

The M.P.-ish person who played Rosencrantz on this occasion did not seem so galled as I had expected at this allusion, so I at once set him down for a mere common-councilman. The other gentleman who wandered about—looking in a blank way at anything—remained what the writers of Latin plays called *muta persona*, a valuable but neglected member of our society.

'I'll now shew you, gentlemen,' said Whinbush, 'one of the greatest of my curiosities: a portion of a vessel's timbers pierced by the beak of a sword-fish. Not many collections have such a treasure.'

It was indeed a very great curiosity, and Strongitharm, even afar off, drew out his well-worn note-book and stumpy pencil. There it was, five inches of solid sound oak, close in the grain as granite (Strongitharm had got out a foot-rule, and measured it with the dexterity of a haberdasher's apprentice), five inches of oak, bound on both sides with copper—some one suggested it was part of the keel—and this solid block was pierced through by the strong beak of the fish, some inches in diameter, which remained jammed firm in the wound which it had made. What tremendous force the creature must have used!

'Coming up from below, the fellow had such a way on, you see,' said Strongitharm, with true nautical emphasis.

'The point of the beak,' said Whinbush, 'is, as you will observe, uninjured.'

'But what a toothache he must have had afterwards!' said Strongitharm. 'No doubt, he mistook the vessel for his enemy the whale.'

Here he made a careful note of the vessel and the date of the voyage, quietly pressing the ex-M.P. into his service to read over the statement on the table as he wrote it down.

'Any Zoolu heads?' asked Strongitharm, with the cool business-like manner of a commercial traveller who wants so many dozen japanned candlesticks.

'No,' said Whinbush, 'but three or four very fine specimens from New Zealand.—Bib!' cried Whinbush to an attendant; 'the key of this case—the small one.—You shall see them.'

Strongitharm tossed one in his hands as it was brought out, and examined it with the air of a nautical Hamlet; for he is a quick, prying, practical man, eager to observe, and brimful of collateral knowledge.

'I was curious to see,' he remarked, 'whether the tattooing has been done before or after death, to sell to the English. No; this one has been done before death, you can see; the lines are closed over. They're civilising New Zealand,' said Strongitharm, after a pause, and with a deep sigh, as he thrust two fingers between the broken plates of

the dry tattooed skull—civilising it, and one can't get those heads now for love or money.'

To the great blow-pipe from Brazil, Whinbush next called our attention. This strange instrument of death—this fatal pea-shooter—was made, as Strongitharm soon shewed us, of a huge tropical cane split in two, cleaned of pith, then bound artfully and closely together with thin strips of cane about as wide as they use for chair-making; last of all, smeared with pitch or some bituminous matter. The little poisoned darts, some seven inches long, and thinner than skewers, the natives twist round at one end with cotton till the darts fit the orifice of the pipe. They take deadly aim with these darts. The slightest puncture in the skin of an animal causes instant death, for they dip the darts in the wourali poison. In the blow-pipes of another part of the world (Sumatra or Borneo, if we remember right), the one end of the dart is fitted with a light collar of wood that fits the orifice of the tube.

Curious spears with four long points for fishing next attracted us; and then we rambled on in this epitome of nations to door-posts of a Burmese temple, and great cases of coral—coral black as charcoal, coral white as snow, coral orange and bossy, coral red, and coral pink! Then some huge Neptune cnps stopped us for a moment—huge jugs that would hold many a gallon.

From an Australian case Strongitharm took out a little flint hammer with a short handle, that the natives use for cutting places to insert their toes in when they climb the gum-trees after the large edible wood-maggot and the savoury opossum. Strongitharm was interested in the substance used to bind the flint on to the handle.

'It is my plan just now,' he said, 'to try everything with fire. I scraped one of these the other day, and burnt the scrapings, and found the stuff proved to be an aromatic gum.'

Next on view was a flute made out of a leg-bone, and one of those wooden hooked instruments that the Australians use for throwing spears.

'Suppose that should be a moa's leg,' said the zealous naturalist. And in a moment he was scraping the flute with his knife; but it proved to be only wood, and the moa's leg was not that day discovered.

Whinbush now turned off down some stairs into a smaller room, devoted entirely to natural history. There was a huge thick-set gorilla, a sword-fish, an armadillo, and some other odd-looking creatures.

In a side-passage that led to the armoury, Whinbush directed our attention to a mantel-piece made out of the foundation-stone of old London Bridge, built in 1209, from which time the stone had been under water till 1825, when its successor was substituted in its place. It still looked firm and sound-hearted. Here our inspection ended, and note-books were shut up. The view had been curious, but a little sorrowful.

As I walked home, I fell into a reverie on the subject of collecting and collectors. What a strange jackdaw pleasure it is, this scraping and raking together; how it relieves the tedium of life; how agreeable it is to see the old unchanging friends you have spent so many hours with, morning after morning, still safe in your cabinet. Yet to this, as to all pleasures (even intellectual ones), there is a seamy side. How often you see men who have

the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Commandments, a couple of prayers, his own name and official position, with the date of the year, month, and queen's reign, in such small characters, that he was able to inclose the paper bearing them in 'the head of a ring.' This odd piece of work Master Peter presented to Queen Elizabeth, together with 'an excellent spectacle, by him devised, for the easier reading thereof,' wherewith the queen read all that was written. We wonder her plain-speaking Majesty did not tell Bale he was a fool for his pains; but, being in a gracious humour, she placed the ring upon her royal finger, in token of her acceptance of the gift, to the great glorification of the happy giver. A Mr Searle, who had but two useful fingers at his command, wrote the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, seven of the Commandments, the 100th, 133d, and 144th Psalms, with his name, address, and the date, within the circumference of a sixpence. Another adept at microscopic penmanship contrived to get the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the whole of the Commandments, and his name within the compass of a silver penny; and a Liverpudlian rival wrote Goldsmith's *Traveler*, containing four hundred and eighty-eight lines, in a square of three and a half inches; the entire book of *Malachi* in a sort of pyramid the size of an ordinary little finger; while a circle three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter gave him room enough for the Lord's Prayer. Pliny affirms the existence of a copy of the *Iliad* which could be kept in a nut-shell, which perhaps accounts for Professor Schreiber taking the trouble to procure a stereographic copy of a German translation of Homer's famous work, filling six hundred pages, but yet so diminutive that a nut-shell sufficed to hold it; an achievement surpassed by the Toledo printer's edition of *Don Quixote*, occupying only fifty-one cigarette papers.

The notion that extreme littleness must perforce make a thing admirable, has led to a deal of ingenuity being wasted that might have been turned to good account. It has been gravely recorded that an artist of the sixteenth century contrived to delineate a city on such a minute scale that a fly would cover the entire painting. We believe the story just as much as we believe in the Dutchwoman's landscape, the size of a grain of corn, in which those with eyes to see could plainly discern a mill, with its sails bent, and the miller toiling up the stairs with a sack, a horse drawing a cart, and several peasants trudging along the country road. So, too, we doubt if Pope Paul V. reckoned according to Cocker when he professed to count sixteen hundred perfectly turned ivory dishes in a peppercorn case, the work of 'the most excellent artisan of that or any age,' Oswaldus Northingus; and suspect the glasses used by the pope were multiplying rather than magnifying ones. Father Johannes Baptista Ferrarius made twenty-five wooden cannon, all properly furnished, for his peppercorn, and then was obliged to manufacture thirty wooden cups ere he could pronounce the casket full. Tradescant's Ark, as the museum of Charles I.'s gardener was called, boasted the possession of a peppercorn containing a set of chessmen. Hadrianus Junius saw, at Mechlin, a cherry stone basket, in which were fourteen pair of dice, the spots upon them easily discernible by an ordinarily good eye; and in the Dresden Museum may, perhaps, yet be seen a

cherry-stone, carved with a hundred and eighty human faces, plainly distinguishable with the aid of a microscope.

In 1745, admirers of little wonders could see plenty such marvels in the Strand. At one shop was exhibited a common Barcelona nut-shell, holding a tea-table, tea-board, a dozen cups and saucers, with sugar-dish and sloop-basin, a bottle, a funnel, fifteen drinking-glasses, five punch-bowls, ten runners, a pestle and mortar, and two sets of ninepins—all of polished ivory, exquisitely fashioned, and to be easily seen without the help of 'optic-glasses.' The ingenious artist, we are told, was a poor, poetical, pènurious mortal, who, being, by the cruel destiny of the planets, driven to the jaws of destruction, had hit upon this method of saving himself. His chance, we fear, was a poor one; for his little exhibition was altogether outdone by a watchmaker, named Boverick, dwelling near the New Exchange, hard by. For the charge of one shilling, he shewed his visitors half a cherry-stone, from which he took a quadrille table, twelve chairs with skeleton backs, a looking-glass, two dozen plates, six dishes, twelve spoons, a dozen knives and forks, two salts, and a lady and gentleman sitting down at table and waited upon by a footman. Having exhausted the contents of his cherry-stone, the watchmaker produced a camel that could pass through the eye of a middle-sized needle, and a pair of steel scissors, warranted to cut a large horsehair, of such dimensions that six pair might be wrapped in the wing of a fly. Then came a chain of two hundred links, with a padlock and key, attached to a flea, the lot weighing one-third of a grain; a four-wheeled ivory chariot, which, with its driver and the flea serving for steed, weighed barely a grain; and a crane-necked carriage, with wheels turning properly upon their axles, carrying four passengers, two footmen, a coachman sitting on his box with a dog between his legs, driving six ivory horses, one of the leaders bearing a postillion, the whole affair so light that a single flea could set it moving. Boverick's exhibition would have astonished honest Mark Scalliot, the London blacksmith, of Elizabeth's time, who thought himself marvellously clever when he made a gold chain of forty-three links, with a lock and key, which, being fastened about a flea's neck, was drawn by it—lock, chain, key, and flea, weighing exactly a grain and a half. Scalliot also made a hanging lock of iron, steel, and brass, with a pipe key, 'filed three-square, with a pot upon the shaft, and the bow with two roses, all clean wrought,' weighing altogether one grain.

In 1771, the nobility, gentry, and curious of all classes were invited to the Great Room in Exeter 'Change to behold the result of twenty years' close application—a piece of mechanism, some four and a half feet square, representing a gentleman's country seat, with buildings, temples, alcoves, grottoes, summer-houses, ponds, and cascades, all complete, enlivened by above a hundred moving figures, employed in bricklaying, carpentering, plumbing, mason's work, joining, and turning. Deer ran about the park; ladies promenaded the garden; round which a six-horse chariot, a pair-horsed phaeton, and a one-horsed chaise duly progressed; with attitudes and motions as natural, if we may take the exhibiter's word, that, although the figures were none of them more than two inches high, they appeared like life itself.

Automata have ever been in high favour with men ambitious only of exciting wonder, and preferring to use their powers of invention and their mechanical ability to amuse the few, rather than to benefit the many. The flying wooden pigeon of Archytas, the brazen birds and serpents of Boetius, the wooden sparrows of Turrano, the iron fly of Regiomontanus, and his wondrous eagle—that wooden bird which we are expected to believe flew from Nuremberg to welcome Maximilian, and, after saluting him, turned round, and led the procession to the city's gates—were but notable examples of misapplied ingenuity. Of what use was Vaucanson's wonderful duck, although it could move its wings, quack, drink water, eat corn, and digest it too? Maillardet's humming-bird, that flew from its nest for a three minutes' warble, might be a thing of beauty, but would assuredly not prove a joy for ever to its owner; while, for his steel spider and his artificial lizard, caterpillar, and snake, only folk of very queer taste would afford them house-room. The Swiss mechanician was not content with fabricating artificial birds, reptiles, and insects. As Vaucanson had his automaton flute-player and piper, Maillardet's masterpiece was a lady pianist, capable of playing for an hour at a time, while her bosom heaved, her eyes seemed to follow the movements of her fingers over the keys, the pressure of which produced the notes; and when she concluded her performance, she saluted her hearers by a graceful inclination of the head.

A hundred years ago, an odd-shaped vehicle, resembling a sedan upon wheels more than anything else, decorated with emblematical figures, was seen pretty regularly every Sunday in Hyde Park. The doors and windows of the conveyance opened from the inside, and, by pulling a string attached to a whip, the occupant administered a reminder to the horse whenever he required one, while a glance at a little dial before him told him how far he had travelled. Everybody knew Merlin's coach, the pride of its contriver and owner, of whom an admirer sang:

Come, patron of merit, bright goddess of Fame!
Aloud to the world Merlin's talents proclaim;
To the favourite of Genius you surely should raise
A tribute of lasting and glorious praise!

Merlin spent a lifetime in constructing mechanical oddities, more remarkable for their ingenuity than their utility. His house in Little Queen Anne Street, Marylebone, was crammed with specimens of his skill. There might be seen a Turk eating stones, a flying-fish 'wafting in air,' a frigate in full sail over a miniature sea, a butterfly sporting around artificial flowers, a reduced copy of the coach itself, as perfect in action as the great original, and other curiosities of the sort too numerous to mention; but we may note two figures representing females, about fifteen inches high, one in a walking, the other in a dancing attitude, which performed almost every motion of the human body—of the head, the breasts, the neck, the arms, the legs, and the fingers, even to the elevation of the eyelids, and the lifting of the hands to the face. Merlin carried his hobby into his amusements. 'He made himself a wheel resembling that of Fortune, and, as that goddess, used to attend almost all the masquerades, rolling along in the car, moved by the motion of his feet, at the same time distributing his

favours, particularly to ladies. He was not less fond of representing the character of Cupid at these places of public amusement, and he, at the same time, imitated Vulcan in forging his own darts, for which he had a fire and a forge; and then he likewise very successfully aimed against the fair sex.'

A man must surely have a bee in his bonnet to devote the leisure of ten years to turning old wine-corks and wasps' nests into the melancholy similitude of a famous cathedral; fit to be paired with the Exmouth artisan's model of Solomon's Temple, with eleven towers, a hundred and eighty-eight pillars, three hundred and eighty-five pinnacles, and nearly a thousand windows, constructed with shells and minerals. A Frenchman occupied all his spare hours for four years over a large mosaic landscape, composed of four thousand different species of insects. The proprietors of the *London Tavern*, the *Crown and Anchor*, and the *Free-masons' Tavern*, were wont, once upon a time, to save all their fish-bones for an ingenious trifter, who, for thirty years, occupied herself in transforming them into likenesses of floral and feathered favourites, spending the best part of her life making

With bones, scales, and eyes, from the prawn to the porpoise;

Fruit, flies, birds, and flowers—oh, strange metamorphose!

Worthless as they may be, such things never lacked, and perhaps will never lack, admirers.

ODDS AND ENDS:

FROM DR ROBERT CHAMBERS'S SCRAP-BOOK.

MENTAL EXCITEMENT.—Active physical exertion—such as rapid walking, riding on horseback, working at any rough occupation in which the hands are busily employed, even the simple matter of cutting up the leaves of a book—produces a certain healthful mental excitement, that may be made useful for literary composition. About the worst of all things for the mind is idleness. There can be no doubt that the reason why many shoemakers have risen to distinction is the constant beating of leather; blacksmiths, too, by their incessant hammering of iron, are similarly benefited. Burns would probably never have attained eminence as a poet, had he not diligently worked at the plough or laboured in the harvest-field. In conversing with his surviving sister, Mrs Begg (1848), she reports strongly about his composing much while ploughing, also when binding sheaves behind the reapers in the harvest-field. She and others reaping would hear him muttering his poetry while at work—heard well enough that it was rhyme. The exercise was obviously favourable to the working of his mind. [A publisher in London, now deceased, always took to folding the sheets of a book, when he wanted to strike out some new idea in his profession. He said it stirred him up.]

THE EMPRESS EUGÉNIE.—Of this lady's Scotch progenitors the following account is seen in the *Dumfries Courier* (1853), and I have no doubt it is correct.

'Nearly a century ago, a highly respectable

gentleman, William Kirkpatrick, first-cousin to the late Sir James Kirkpatrick, Baronet, of Closeburn, was proprietor of the estate of Conheath, in the parish of Caerlaverock, where he resided. The estate had originally been one of the numerous possessions of the Closeburn family, of which he was a cadet, but had passed out of their hands, and was re-purchased by Mr Kirkpatrick's grandfather. He had a very large family. One of his sons, also a William Kirkpatrick, settled as a merchant in Malaga, and remained there till his death, a period of upwards of twenty-five years, during a considerable portion of which time he held the office of American consul there. He married the eldest daughter of Baron Grievguie, by whom he had one son and three daughters. The son died early. The daughters all married, the youngest to a cousin of her own, and is since dead. The other two married Spanish noblemen. One still resides with her family at Malaga; the other is the Countess de Montijo, and mother of Napoleon's empress, lately Countess Téba. Thus the great-grand-daughter of the proprietor of a small estate in Dumfriesshire became the Empress of the French.

The origin of the once powerful family of Closeburn, of which, as we have shewn, the Empress is a lineal descendant, is lost in antiquity. They possessed many extensive estates in this country at a very early period, and were proprietors of Closeburn from the twelfth century till the year 1783, when it was sold to Mr Menteath. In the parish of Closeburn there was formerly a chapel dedicated to St Patrick, and its site gave name to the farm of Kirkpatrick. From this place the Kirkpatricks assumed their surname in the thirteenth century. The circumstance of Kirkpatrick assisting Robert Bruce to slay Cumyn in the Greyfriars Church, Dumfries, on the 10th February 1305, is well known, and it is from this that the family took the crest and motto which they still bear.

Roger Kirkpatrick, in 1355, was powerful enough to expel the English from the castles of Dalswinton and Caerlaverock. He got a grant of the latter, and resided in the castle till he was murdered by Sir James Lindsay, in the year 1357. The circumstances of this murder are remarkable, and form the subject of a fine ballad by the late Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe. Lindsay and Kirkpatrick were suitors for the hand of the same lady; the latter was preferred, and Lindsay was a wedding-guest at the castle of Caerlaverock. In the dead of night, Lindsay stole up to the bridal chamber, and stabbed his successful rival to the heart, and escaped on horseback. When the deed was discovered the men-at-arms went off in pursuit. A storm had arisen, and Lindsay, confused, had ridden round, in place of away from the castle: he was taken, and executed at the castle gate. The barony was afterwards restored to the Maxwells.

[Had the writer of the foregoing account lived till 1874, he would undoubtedly have lamented the reverse of fortune of the now widowed Empress Eugénie, and spoken with satisfaction of her discretion and her friendliness towards England in the days of her prosperity.]

A STRANGE STORY.—We sometimes hear of strange articles being found in the stomach of a cod; but never till now (1850) in the stomach of a

horse. In a copy of *Galignani*, I find the following. The contractor for slaughtering horses at Montfaucon purchased, a short time ago, a lot of old worn-out animals, including several which had belonged to the army. In putting up one of the aged military horses, a man named Matelot was astonished to find a small silver box, in which were a cross of the Legion of Honour, and a paper, in a perfect state of preservation, containing the following lines—'As I cannot survive the defeat of my Emperor, and as I have neither wife, nor child, nor cousins, I am about to get myself killed in a last charge against the English, and as I will not let them have my cross, I will make my faithful horse, Château Margot, swallow it. He will give it up when he can.—PIERRE DARDENNE, Sergeant in the 2d squadron of Red Lancers.' Matelot took the things to the commissary of police of the district, and that functionary allowed him to keep the silver box. As for the cross, it was sent to the Grande Chancellerie of the Legion of Honour. From documents published by the professors of the Ecole d'Alfort, it appears that certain horses have lived to the age of forty-five; that which Charles XII. rode at the battle of Pultowa attained that age. The white charger of Napoleon lived twenty-nine years. Château Margot is supposed to have been about forty. He had been made to swallow the box at the battle of Waterloo, in which his master wilfully perished. The box had accordingly been in his stomach five-and-thirty years.

THE FOOD OF A LIFETIME.—M. Soyer, cook of the Reform Club, is a person of considerable genius, a good deal above ordinary artists in his peculiar line. In one of his books, the *Modern Housewife*, he enters into a calculation as to how much food an epicure of seventy years of age has consumed. This imaginary epicure, who is supposed to be a wealthy personage, is placed by him on Primrose Hill at ten years old, and told to look around him at the vast assemblage of animals and other objects he will in the course of a lifetime send down his throat—the sight of which is, of course, described as appalling. Among other things, he is to devour 30 oxen, 200 sheep, 100 calves, 200 lambs, 50 pigs, 1200 fowls, 300 turkeys, 263 pigeons, 120 turbot, 140 salmon, 30,000 oysters, 5475 pounds-weight of vegetables, 243½ pounds of butter, 24,000 eggs, and 4½ tons of bread, besides fruits, sweetmeats, &c. and 49 hogsheads of wine, 584 gallons of spirits, and about 3000 gallons of tea and coffee. This is a mere outline of what we are told is destined to be consumed. To shew there is no exaggeration, Soyer assures us that he has from experience made up a scale of food for the day for a period of sixty years, and 'it amounts to 33½ tons-weight of meat, farinaceous food, and vegetables, &c.' One is not prepared to dispute the calculations of so clever an expert. All we can say is, that the picture he presents is very suggestive. That he has not exaggerated in at least one particular, I am prepared to verify. A gentleman of my acquaintance has for the last fifty years eaten every morning two eggs for breakfast—making 730 per annum, or a total for the whole period 36,500 eggs. This goes considerably beyond Soyer!

A HINT FROM THOMAS CARLYLE.—In March 1851, Mr Carlyle, being invited to attend a soirée of the Mechanics' Institution of Annan (a town

in his native county, where he had been at school), sent to the secretary the following characteristic reply, which is too good to be lost. 'Sir—Will you be so kind as to express to the gentlemen of your committee my thanks for the honour done me, and my regret to answer, as I now do, that there is not the least possibility of my attending the *soirée* you are about to hold? You judge rightly that Annan has such a hold of my memory as few other places in the world have. There can nothing useful or notable go on there that does not peculiarly interest me; no attempt towards being useful but has my heartiest good wishes, as this *soirée* among others. May it really prosper and be of benefit to you all. May no unwise word be spoken in it; and, what is perhaps even more important, and still rarer in these times, may the good words spoken begin straightway, silently, on all hands, to get themselves prepared for being *done* into facts, and so the pleasant eloquence convert itself into valiant human practice, *without* which latter results the eloquence itself is worth little, nay, nothing, or even, if we count well, a frightful *minus* quantity, fatally less than nothing.—In great haste, with many wishes and regards, I have the honour to be your obedient servant, T. CARLYLE.' This hint is worth keeping in mind by speakers at commemorative meetings in other towns besides Annan. The business of life is not to talk, but to do, and do valiantly!

SHE DIES AT SUNSET.—DUCROW, the famous equestrian, was an eccentric kind-hearted man. He used to give his people a fête at Blackwall every year. Bunn was with him on one occasion, and the two sat at a window in the hotel to see the party arrive in boats. 'Do you find your fellows at all honest?' inquired Bunn. 'O no,' replied Ducrow; 'but no matter for that; we get on pretty well. I used to find them bowing civilly at the commencement of the season, but always stiff as grenadiers when they passed me towards its close. On examining into it, I found each man going out with a plank of my wood up along his back under his clothes. This kind of thing is now stopped. But see, there now, these fellows coming rowing up in their shirts; I have no doubt that these shirts are made of my banners.' [Banners are cotton sheets brought in at such theatres, with inscriptions on them to inform the audience of circumstances necessary for them to know in the progress of the pantomime.] 'See, now,' continued Ducrow, 'see them raising their oars as they land, and look at that fellow's shirt, with **SHE DIES AT SUNSET**, under his arm!'

FORCE OF GRAVITY.—It is not usually considered how animal and vegetable life on our planet is adapted in exact relation to force of gravity. Had the earth been a little larger or smaller, things would have been somewhat different. As regards the vegetable world, this is interestingly put by Whewell: 'As an instance of the adaptation between the force of gravity and forces which exist in the vegetable world, we may take the positions of flowers. Some flowers grow with the hollow of their cups upwards; others "hang the pensive head," and turn the opening downwards. The positions, in these cases, depend upon the length and flexibility of the stalk which supports the flower, or, in the case of the *euphorbia*, the germin. It is clear that a very slight alteration in the force

of gravity, or in the stiffness of the stalk, would entirely alter the position of the flower-cups, and thus make the continuation of the species impossible. We have, therefore, here a little mechanical contrivance, which would have been frustrated, if the proper intensity of gravity had not been assumed in the reckoning. An earth, greater or smaller, denser or rarer, than the one on which we live, would require a change in the structure and strength of the foot-stalks of all the little flowers that hang their heads under our hedges. There is something curious in thus considering the whole mass of the earth, from pole to pole, and from circumference to centre, as employed in keeping a snowdrop in the position most suited to the promotion of its vegetable health.'

A COUNTRY SABBATH.

Now soars the lark in heaven's eyes;

Through leafy crypt now steals the stream,
With shallow dimple, sword-blade gleam,
And glimpses of divine surprise.

Heaven's golden fire and air of blue
Are dropped about the bowery world;
Within her holy bosom furled
The sun has drunk the rose's dew.

The landscape all around is fair,
But this remains the heart and gem;
With stealing stream, and graceful stem,
And sunlit park, and sweet parterre.

The vista fascinates my gaze;
I linger in a blessed trance,
See in a dream the waters glance,
And things that are the food of praise.

In many an English cottage round
Japonica, a glory, glows;
Her ruby-coloured sister blows;
And purple pansies gem the ground.

The first laburnum droops her curls,
And mingles with the lilac's locks;
O'er golden meadows browse the flocks;
The orchard-blossom types sweet girls.

The sweet-brier sheds its heavenly breath;
I pass the wallflower's rich perfume;
And chestnut with its tint-freaked plume;
O world to banish dreams of death!

The scent of flower, the song of bird,
The lace of leaf, the light of heaven,
Are vital with a mystic leaven

We have a soul for, not a word:

Unless it be—the Breath of God;
Which also breathes in yon church-bell;
It breaks on me with what a spell
Across the May-embroidered sod!

Earth, clothed with Sabbath, thou art fair!
Ye two upon each other act!
The Sabbath steeps the flowery tract,
And finer seems to make the air.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH. Also sold by all Booksellers.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 529.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

ROMANCING.

FRANCIS BACON has said that 'no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage-ground of truth.' We would not say there is a general disregard of this kind of pleasure, nor of the obligation of speaking the truth under a sense of duty; but obviously, when party purposes are to be served, or when some narrow kinds of selfishness or silly vanities are concerned, there is little care about being truthful, or, what comes much to the same thing—the truth is artfully suppressed to serve a particular end.

In speaking as well as writing the truth, there is doubtless an improvement—we mean in England—as compared with former times, pictured by historians and essayists. Yet, things are not what one could wish. Although the character of a habitual liar is far from being reputable, many go on telling lies and conveying false impressions all their days, without incurring serious question. They fall into the habit of telling droll or heroic stories about themselves that are no better than a romance, at which their friends laugh or pass over with a smile, though known to be falsehoods. The mind of these romancers seems to be twisted off its balance. They perhaps do not deliberately mean to lie, but, carried away by their feelings, and wishing to shew off, they plunge into a recital abounding with ingenious but ridiculous inventions. As they begin, they stick to the truth, but warming up, you see, by their impassioned glare, that they have dashed headlong into the realms of fiction.

That these romancers, to call them so, derive pleasure from their fabrications, can hardly be questioned. We have known several—seemingly a happy sort of beings. They did not do much harm by their lies, for the world had learned what was their foible, and laughed as much at as with them. 'In these arms Abercrombie died!' a middle-aged gentleman used to say, with fervid emotion, when detailing circumstances in his past life. Everybody knew he was romancing. He was

looked upon as a harmless and amusing version of Baron Munchausen.

The bad example set by some ladies, in directing their domestics to say they are 'not at home' to visitors, instead of candidly mentioning that they are at present engaged, can hardly fail to be demoralising. It accustoms servants to lie on their own behalf. Whether arising from this vicious practice, or from natural infirmity, female domestics, in particular, are occasionally found to be desperate romancers. Several occur to our remembrance. If too late in coming home at night, they would dress up the most extraordinary tissue of falsehoods to account for their detention. One excelled in lying. Her stories were really ingenious. For having been out all night, she told, with symptoms of distress, that 'on her way home in the previous evening, a messenger overtook her from her mother in the country, to say that her foster-brother had, while crossing a field, been savagely gored by a bull, and was not expected to live; that this foster-brother was a foundling; he had been discovered under the shelter of a bush, wrapped in a dark-brown shawl with a yellow border, and was a sweet infant with light-blue eyes, prettily dressed in a cambrie frock; that her mother, being a kind-hearted though poor woman, could not resist the desire to keep and suckle the child, who had grown up a dutiful son, and been a good scholar; that on being hurriedly summoned to the death-bed of this worthy young man, she had gone off in all speed to see him, but that he was dead on her arrival (shower of tears), and that her mother was inconsolable; that she waited as long as possible to assist in regard to the funeral, which was to be next Thursday at one o'clock; and that her mother trusted she would be able to be present at this last and distressing scene.' The romance was credited, compassion was excited, and a benefaction for behoof of the heart-broken foster-parent was given. It was not till some time afterwards, when the lies of this accomplished fictionist became too palpable for belief, that the story of the bull and the alleged foster-brother was found to be a falsehood from beginning to end.

This woman should (if with the ability to spell and construct sentences in decent English) have taken to romance-writing. Her inventiveness as a domestic only got her turned about her business.

Of course, we have to draw a distinction between the inventors of lies for a mischievous purpose, and the relators of professed fictions, or the utterers of jokes and humorous sallies, which are understood to have for their object a little passing amusement, or it may be the chastisement of some impropriety. Just as parables or similitudes were employed to convey instruction in an effective way regarding moral and social duties, so have the story-tellers of all ages been appreciated for bringing imagination to the support of what is characteristic in human nature. So, also, with the Improvisatori of Italy and the East, who invent incidents as they proceed in their poetical harangues, not to deceive in the quality of liars, but to 'hold up the mirror to nature,' as is visibly done in the action of the drama, to which, when conducted in a right spirit, there never can be any rational objection.

Those who meanly indulge in the fabrication of falsehoods in order to mislead, or to cover some personal delinquency, stand in an entirely different category. They are constantly presenting themselves in endless variety, from the wretched domestic who tries to deceive her mistress, to the learned disputant who unworthily maligns a successful rival in science, or to the political writer who does not scruple to invent and circulate what he knows to be untrue, with a view to help the interests of his party. Of this last variety of lying, we have unfortunately almost daily specimens, greatly to the discredit of a press which otherwise merits a eulogium for its purity. One is the more disposed to lament any such imperfection, when remembering that through a disregard of truth, and a pandering to national weaknesses, the Parisian press diverged into wholesale and systematic lying as regards the events and issues of the Franco-German war, thereby damaging the very cause which was professedly espoused. It might almost be said that France has been ruined by lies.

The most melancholy of all lies are those with which a man tries to impose upon himself. Conscience tells him he is acting wrongly and he endeavours to deny the fact by some kind of delusive subterfuge. This kind of internal lying is finely referred to in Carlyle's *Cromwell*: 'False in speech; alas, false in thought, first of all; who have never let the Fact tell its own harsh story to them; who have said always to the harsh Fact, "Thou art not that way, thou art this way!"' What an uncovering of human infirmity!

There is, we believe, a theory that a counsel, however earnest, must not give it as his own opinion that his client the defendant at the bar is innocent. That would be going too far, and possibly meet with rebuke. With this reservation, every device, as it would appear, may be employed to rebut the evidence for the prosecution, and secure an acquittal. To what extent this may be

done with a safe conscience, when there is a private knowledge that the defendant is guilty of the crime laid to his charge, is a question rather painful to consider. Doing their best professionally on the side of the weakest, one would not like to pass a severe judgment on the sayings and doings of counsel in the ordinary class of cases; but we may at anyrate avow that the latitude in which certain of our 'learned friends' sometimes indulge is so far beyond the bounds of propriety as to produce no small degree of astonishment. Recent events have materially contributed to lower 'the bar' in public estimation—a thing to be regretted.

Falsehoods to palm off essentially fraudulent commercial schemes, such as those for which Americans have gained an unenviable notoriety, too often, like base political lies for party purposes, escape with the most casual remark, as if a matter of no consequence. The disposition to treat a political lie as a thing which will just serve its turn for a day, and be not heard of the next, argues some ignorance of facts, as well as a heartless trifling with truth. The *canard*, as a political falsehood is euphemistically called, may last no more than a day or a week in the place of its birth, but its career is not then at an end. Talleyrand is said to have made the sage remark, that 'if you give a lie half an hour, you may chase it round the world.' What in his time took days and weeks, is now performed in a few minutes. A lie of some note issued in London, is next morning over the whole of North America, has reached India, Australia, and New Zealand, and who can tell the injury it may have inflicted in its world-wide excursion! The celerity which marks the progress of various kinds of lies was discovered long before the days of Talleyrand. Dr John Arbutnot, the friend of Pope, Swift, Gay, and Prior, in his *History of John Bull* (1712), makes some smart observations regarding lies and their duration: 'As to the celerity of their motion, it is almost incredible. There are several instances of lies that have gone faster than a man can ride post. Your terrifying lie travels at a prodigious rate, above ten miles an hour. Your whispers move in a narrow vortex, but very swiftly. It is impossible to explain several phenomena in relation to the celerity of lies, without the supposition of synchronism and combination. As to the duration of lies, they are of all sorts, from hours and days to ages; there are some which, like insects, die and revive again in a different form; good artists, like people who build upon a short lease, will calculate the duration of a lie surely to answer their purpose; to last just as long, and no longer than the turn is served.'

Were we to draw up a *catalogue raisonné* of the various departments and qualities of lying, it would—if we embraced the different orders of romancers and *canard* circulators—be a somewhat startling production. That, however, is beyond our rôle. All we can do is to offer a useful hint. Books

have been written on the Anatomy of Sleep and the Anatomy of Drunkenness. At present, there is a peculiarly favourable opening for a work on the Anatomy of Lying, with a chapter specially devoted to ingeniously fabricated false evidence in Courts of Justice.

W. C.

THE STORY OF BURTON'S LOAN.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.—BEGIN BY GODFREY BURTON.

IN 1870, I was in difficulties. The situation was not absolutely novel in my experience, for I was not born to, nor had I achieved, the greatness which consists in always having as much money as one wants. But, as that particular crisis in my difficulties happens to be associated with certain occurrences in the life of Arthur Digby, which I am requested to narrate, I mention the fact. Arthur Digby, a young barrister of whom people are beginning to hear at present, was in 1870 working very hard in obscurity, at both law and literature, actuated by the double motive of great natural industry, and an exceedingly imprudent attachment to a remarkably beautiful girl, who, in popular phrase, 'had not a shilling.' Alice Townshend was the only daughter of a widow, a mild little lady, of a simple and unworldly way of thinking, who had consented to an engagement between the young people, which had already lasted a year. Of course, I, being a proverbially imprudent person, had preached prudence in the first instance to Arthur; equally, of course, he had paid the utmost disregard to everything I said; and when he introduced me to Alice Townshend, I was disgusted with myself for having said it, and advised him to marry her as soon as she could get her wedding-gown made. Though he laughed at me, Arthur repeated my sage counsel to his betrothed, and I believe it made her take to me at once.

In the summer of 1870, Arthur Digby began to see his way to giving Alice a home, for which he might decently ask her to exchange her mother's picturesque cottage at Dulwich; and we were all in tolerably good spirits. I was almost as free of the cottage, by this time, as Arthur himself, and as much in the confidence of Mrs Townshend, with respect to her hopes, her fears, her pride, admiration, and general feelings regarding her only and absent son. According to Mrs Townshend, this incomparable Herbert combined every physical and moral perfection; but he had unaccountably failed to qualify himself for any of the possibly distinguished careers which had been proposed to him, and was now in Paris, filling some situation, respecting which his mother's statements were anything but clear. A large and handsomely framed portrait of Herbert Townshend occupied a conspicuous position in the drawing-room of the cottage, which contained only one other object of much interest. This was a beautiful and valuable cabinet of ebony and red lacker-work, a superb specimen of the style known as 'Louis Treize,' and was a relic of former wealth long since dissipated by Herbert's ancestors. The portrait represented a young man, the effect of whose fine features was injured by a self-important and supercilious expression, but who was undeniably one of those whom women persist in admiring, to the contempt and indignation of ugly men.

Early in my acquaintance with the inmates of

the cottage, I had seen that Arthur was apt to get bored and fidgety when Mrs Townshend turned the conversation upon her son; and one night, about a week after I had made my before-mentioned successful *coup* with respect to Alice, I said to Arthur, as we were walking up to town together: 'But what about the brother, this wonderful Herbert? You know him, don't you? Odd sort of thing his being in Paris, isn't it?'

'Not in the least,' replied Arthur; 'and very lucky for him. I do know him, and he is simply a selfish, scheming, ill-tempered fellow, half-mad with vanity. His mother adores him; and Alice, though I don't think she is quite such a true believer as she pretends to be, has a notion that he is a persecuted hero. The truth about him is, he got into bad company, made a fool of himself in many ways, cost his mother a great deal more than his fair share of the little there is, was quite unfit for any profession, and was only too lucky, for his sake and theirs, to get into his present place.'

'But what is it? I cannot conceive how a young man, of whom nothing could be made here, in his own country, came to be taken into responsible and decently paid employment in France.'

'It is odd, when you put it in that light,' said Arthur; 'but he speaks French perfectly—it is about the only thing he can do, I believe; and he had a lot of foreign acquaintances here. I suppose they got him into Leecoq's. I don't know the particulars; but I don't mind telling you that I am very glad he is provided for on the French, rather than on the English side of the Channel.'

'But how is he employed? I repeated. 'How is he occupied? What is Leecoq's?'

'I don't exactly know. Mixed sort of affair, I fancy. A little stock-broking and life-insuring, and general agency, and a good deal of touting and speculating.'

'Is he the man for that kind of thing?'

'Yes; I should say so. Shallow, and showy, and specious, with a good deal of servility and cunning under his grand air. He deals in magnificent generalities in his letters. I don't pretend to understand them, and I have never seen him since he went to Paris.'

I do not remember that Herbert Townshend was again mentioned between Arthur and me, but I became very familiar with the idea of him and his ways and doings thenceforth; and in the course of the summer, when my difficulties were quite enough to occupy my mind, without France and Prussia combining to bother me, by going to war with one another, I was called upon to sympathise with the anxiety and alarm of Mrs Townshend and Alice about the incomparable Herbert.

Of course, they expected Herbert to come home, but he scoffed at the idea. How little they knew of business! He doubted as little as any Frenchman that the fortune of war would be with the eagles of France; and when the siege of Paris was talked of as a possibility, he equalled any native *blagueur* in his denunciations and denials. Among the impressions of that time, as distinguished from the knowledge which came later, I recall two, which I imparted to Arthur Digby, after a visit to the cottage. The first was, that Herbert Townshend took his time about answering his mother's letters. She never heard from him under four days from the date of his own communications. The second was, that his letters, whose contents were always imparted

to us, did not ring true. Mrs Townshend and Alice read few newspapers, and were not familiar with the style of special correspondents. But we were, and many of Herbert's fine phrases were old acquaintances of ours. Nothing but a vague distrust and disquietude came of these impressions; but I record them here, in their place and order.

The worst had come to the worst; the siege of Paris was at its sharpest point, and absolute isolation from all the rest of the world was the lot of the brightest and gayest of cities. The war-cloud dropped its sullen fringe over the cottage at Dulwich. Dismay was in the hearts of the mother and sister there; dismay which Arthur and I pitied deeply, but did not share. No special peril was likely to come to an Englishman peacefully pursuing his usual avocations, though the possibility of his pursuing them made me more anxious to know what they could be; and though Alice and her mother felt assured that Herbert would rush into the most dangerous adventures which might offer themselves, their forebodings were not infectious. No news of him reached England after the investiture of Paris. So approached the sad and heavy Christmas-tide of 1870. Arthur Digby and I were to dine on Christmas-day at the cottage, and to sleep at a little inn close by. We determined to go down to Dulwich on the preceding evening, so as to accompany the ladies to early service on Christmas morning; and with that intention we met at the Victoria Station on Saturday, Christmas eve, at 9 p.m. It was a clear, cold night; hard snow lay on the ground, and the air was keen and frosty. We had some time to wait for a train, and we walked briskly away from the station, over Eccleston Bridge, and along the outer wall of the station towards Eccleston Square. As we passed across the opening of a narrow street to the left, a street of mean houses, with a rag-shop and a livery-stable on a small scale among its illustrations, Arthur Digby stopped to look at his watch by the light of a gas-lamp. At that moment a man crossed the roadway rapidly, and struck into the little street. We saw him only for a moment, it is true, but we saw him distinctly. He was tall, slight, thin-faced, with blue eyes, fine features, drooping fair moustaches, and light hair. He wore a loose overcoat trimmed with fur, and a soft low-crowned hat with a turned-up brim. Immediately behind him came another man, a bullet-headed, strong-jawed, black-bearded man, unmistakably a foreigner, and equally unmistakably a Frenchman. The latter was emoking a thick, ill-smelling cigar. They were both lost to sight in a moment. But while that moment lasted, a vague recognition of the younger man's face came over me, and I turned to Arthur. He was staring down the little street, his watch in his hand.

'What an extraordinary likeness!' he said: 'I could have sworn that was Herbert Townshend!'

'That's it!' said I quickly. 'The picture! I thought I had seen the face somewhere.'

'Come, let us get back to the station; time's up, Burton,' added Arthur after a pause, as we turned in at the gateway by the Grosvenor Hotel. 'Don't mention our having seen any one like Herbert to either Alice or her mother. They're superstitious, God bless them! like all women who have hearts, and are worth anything: they would make sure it meant all kinds of things, ranging from his having fallen gallantly in a *sortie* under Trochu, to his

being reduced to his last rat-pie; and they would think it wicked to enjoy themselves the least bit on Christmas-day.'

We remained three days at Dulwich; and, on the whole, though the absent son and brother was not forgotten, and though we talked a great deal of the horrors and the miseries of the war, Mrs Townshend was pleased and amused. Arthur Digby and Alice of course were happy. They were considerably less selfish than any other lovers whose habits and customs I have had an opportunity of remarking, but they were inevitably more interested in their own than in any other human affairs. Several plans for the future were formed on that occasion, in which I had a friendly part assigned to me. We all came to the conclusion that everything would go well; Paris would be relieved, or would honourably capitulate; Herbert would come to London, having done indefinite wonders; and Arthur and Alice were to be married after Easter, as there was really no use in waiting until they should be richer, or rather less poor.

While the betrothed lovers were taking a walk, in the Garden of Eden, on the third day, Mrs Townshend told me of a little bit of good fortune which had befallen her. She had been advised to purchase a few shares in a copper mine some time previously, and the investment had at first turned out ill. But the friend who had counselled her had induced her to hold her shares, and trust to time and the fluctuations of the copper market. The result was favourable, and she might now sell her shares to considerable advantage.

'Sell them to-morrow, my dear madam!' I exclaimed eagerly, according to my invariable principle, founded on a deep constitutional distrust of shares and of delay.

'Not quite so soon, but very soon, I mean to sell them,' said Mrs Townshend: 'a farther rise is almost certain, and I don't want the money just yet, for I mean to apply it to furnishing Alice's house, as far as it will go. It will be only three hundred and fifty pounds in all, and that won't do much; but it depends on the scale of one's ambition, you know, and Alice's notions are modest and moderate. To be able to do even so much for her, is an unexpected blessing, for which I am deeply grateful. She will have everything I possess, at my death, for Herbert will be far removed from requiring anything it will be in my feeble power to leave him; but I am so thankful that this has come now.'

Oh, the maternal love and pride in the old lady's face, in her slightly flurried voice! And oh, the pathos in the trembling of the fingers, which she interlaced, to keep them quiet!

At this point, I am obliged to refer to myself. The subject is not interesting, and in the story of my difficulties there is nothing but the absolutely commonplace. I was in debt, much beyond my present means of payment, because I had expended money which I ought to have saved, and wasted time which I ought to have employed. Idler and spendthrift! Could anything be done? I had wakened up to the folly of my proceedings. If I could, but get time, and borrow a lump sum, I should come all right: time, in which to pay the creditors who would wait, and a lump sum—not a very big lump either—to pay off those who would not, and to whom I owed comparatively and

respectively very small sums. The means to the attainment of these ends formed a frequent subject of discussion between Arthur and myself, which was invested with this additional difficulty, that if I went about raising money in any of the usual ways, and the fact should come to my uncle's ears, he would inevitably strike my name out of his will. He had never wanted money nor owed money in his life; and he regarded any one who departed from the first condition as a contemptible object, and any one who departed from the second as a deliberate felon. He prided himself upon solidity of character, and in his decisions there was no compromise to his generalisations; modification was unknown.

I was getting on pretty well in my walk, which was that of light and desultory literature, making a few pounds here, and stopping a gap with the money there; but still, things were very uncomfortable, and they became more so; and thus it happened that just at the time when all the world was occupied with the tremendous news of the completion of the German triumph by the capitulation of Paris, my stupid and insignificant difficulties so oppressed and bothered me that I did not feel able to think or care much about it. I was only feebly interested, when one dull foggy day, when the sky and the streets also seemed to be in sympathetic and inextricable trouble, Arthur Digby came to tell me that Herbert Townshend had left Paris immediately upon the city's being opened to the world again, and had arrived at the cottage. The delight of his mother and sister was naturally very great, and they kindly wished me to share it. I had been very busy of late, and I had not seen Mrs Townshend and Alice for fully a month. But I could not go to Dulwich just then; not only that; I felt I must go away from the atmosphere of worry I was in—please to remember that I acknowledge I deserved to be in it—in order to get through some profitable work which I had on hand. I explained this to Arthur, charged him with my excuses, told him where I should be to be found, by him only, for the ensuing fortnight, and left town that evening. On the following day, I received a note from Arthur:

'DEAR B.—Since I saw you, I have struck ile. Nothing less than a lady, client of a friend of mine, who wishes to lend a few hundred pounds at a fair interest. I think the thing can be done, by fully explaining matters to her, though the security would not exactly bear investigation; but I am sure it will be all right, to the figure of three hundred and fifty pounds. I have to go to the cottage to-morrow; but I shall see you next day without fail, and am not without hope I shall be able to bring you news of the arrangement. A. D.

Surprised, pleased, and expectant, I waited, in my country retreat, for Arthur's coming; but he did not come: then for a letter from him; but he did not write. Four days passed away, and he made no sign. I wrote repeatedly, without effect. When a week had elapsed, I went up to town, and to Arthur's chambers in the Temple. There I could get no news of him. My letters lay unopened on the table, among his papers; and his clerk had nothing to add to his first answer to my inquiries. Mr Digby had gone away from chambers on the day on which I had expected to see him at my retreat, carrying a small travelling

bag—he had not said where he was going, or when he should return. As I was turning away, full of indescribable apprehension, it occurred to me to ask if any ladies had called to inquire about Mr Digby. The clerk said Mrs and Miss Townshend had both been there, and seemed much concerned at Mr Digby's absence.

I went at once to Dulwich.

CONTINUED BY ALICE TOWNSHEND.

I am desired by Godfrey Burton, my Arthur's friend, to set down for him in writing, as plainly, as exactly, and as briefly as I can, the recent occurrences, so that they may serve him as data in the efforts he is making to help us in our terrible distress. I will try to obey him, and perhaps I may succeed, as he asks me for facts only: the feelings of this time, beginning in vague surprise and fear, and now verging upon stupefaction, I could not put into words.

When the dreadful suspense of the siege of Paris was over, my mother heard from my brother. His letter was brief, and merely stated that he was coming to London very soon, and might possibly arrive without further announcement. This letter had been inclosed in some business documents which he had despatched to London, and it reached us in an envelope addressed by a hand unknown to us, and bearing a district postmark. Arthur came to see us the same evening, and three days later, my brother arrived, to our great joy. I must now return to the interval between the arrival of my brother's letter and his own. My mother had requested our friend, Mr Harding, to sell for her some shares which she held in a copper mine, and to hand the money they were to produce (three hundred and fifty pounds) to Mr Digby, when he should call upon him to receive it. She had requested Arthur to call on Mr Harding at his earliest convenience, and had heard from him that he intended to do so on the following day, and that he would come to Dulwich, bringing the money with him the next evening. My mother replied to this letter by one in which she told Arthur the joyful news of Herbert's arrival earlier than we had ventured to expect him. Then Arthur wrote to me, saying that he would not come down until a day later, as even his presence might just at first be an intrusion. Thus, my brother had been two days with us before we saw Arthur. I am to record my impressions of him here, but I am not told for what reason. I obey. I thought Herbert looking very strong and healthy, notwithstanding all the suffering, danger, and privation of the siege of Paris. But he was changed in appearance and manners. I disliked his drooping moustache, and his quick, peremptory, suspicious way; and I was angry with myself for noticing these things so soon. He was very affectionate to us, but he was impatient and preoccupied; and he turned upon us quite sharply, after he had been a very short time in the house, for asking him questions about the siege, and the unfortunate people in Paris. 'For any sake, let me have a chance of forgetting it all, for the little time I shall be here,' he said, and we did not blame him. If our curiosity and interest were natural, his business was natural too. He talked a great deal of being excessively occupied; and, though he told us very few particulars, we gathered from him that much of his work was done in Paris

itself, and that it had not been suspended during the siege. At times he was very absent: his mind seemed to wander uncontrollably, and he would pace hurriedly up and down the room, or gaze idly out of the window. My mother was so enraptured at his return, so thankful for his safety, that she did not perceive anything of this, and I have no doubt she would be unable to recognise the facts I state. On the evening of the second day, Herbert was less absent, more like his former self, and then he entered seriously into our affairs, and inquired into the arrangements for my marriage with Arthur. Oh, how hard it is to write those words now! My mother told him of the unexpected piece of good fortune which would enable her to give me a little help in beginning the world; and added that it was a great consolation to her to know that he was at least comfortably provided for. It may not be necessary to the purpose of the narrative required from me, but I must record here how cordially my mother recognised Arthur's disinterestedness. 'Only for this,' she said, 'I should have had nothing to give his wife but her wedding-clothes; but, thank Heaven, I have no claims which I don't make our little income meet, and this is absolutely to spare.' Herbert said little; he did not seem as glad as I expected. To me he spoke a little slightly, said 'love-matches were senseless, wretched affairs,' and a few hurtful things of the kind; but I passed them over; he was always easily affected by the people he lived amongst, and he had taken up these notions in Paris. But, when we were separating for the night, just as I was putting up my face to kiss him, and therefore could see his face very distinctly, I said: 'You may make little of love-matches now, Herbert; but you will be of a different opinion some day, when you introduce me to your wife.' He pushed me away, impatiently saying: 'Nonsense; you don't know what you are talking about; and his face turned violently red, which I pretended not to see. The strongest impression concerning Herbert which I have to record is, that he is in love, and on that account in trouble.

On the following day my Arthur came to us, but not accompanied, as we had hoped he would be, by Mr Burton. As soon as we were alone, he told me that he was in great perplexity and distress of mind on Mr Burton's account. He had been on the verge of completing an arrangement of much importance for Mr Burton, had led him to believe it would be satisfactorily carried out, and it had failed. He was going down to the country the next day but one, to see his friend, and he had hoped to have taken to him a sum of money which would have relieved him of troublesome embarrassments, but would now have to take to him a disappointment instead. 'There will be nothing for it but that Godfrey should keep away for the present, and let me try my luck in some other direction.'

We had much to make us happy that day; but Arthur, gentle and loving as he always was, could not throw off the effect of his disappointment; and my mother, remarking his gravity, was a little offended. She is so proud of Herbert, she is so devoted to him, that the notion that Arthur did not take sufficient pleasure in his presence, hurt her. I quickly perceived this, and whispered to Arthur that he ought to explain his low spirits to

her; she also being deeply interested in Mr Burton. He took an opportunity of doing so, when giving her an account of his visit to Mr Harding, and handing her the money he had received, which was destined to assist in the furnishing of the house he and I were so soon to inhabit.

My mother and Arthur were seated at a table in the window; I was standing behind Arthur's chair, when he handed to my mother a bundle of bank-notes, and asked her to count them. She did so—three hundred and fifty pounds.

'Put them safely away,' said he. 'No; just let me have them back a minute.' He took them from her, took out his pencil, looked about him, and picked up an envelope which lay on the floor, turned the notes over rapidly on his knee, and made a memorandum of their numbers; then put the bundle once more into my mother's hand, and the memorandum into his pocket.

'Alice shall copy that neatly into your book, by-and-bye,' he said. 'Put the notes away, ma'am.'

My mother rose, and Arthur turned to me. She went to the ebony cabinet, and opened the heavy centre door. We drew near, for the interior of the complicated and beautiful piece of furniture had an unfailing charm for us. At this moment, Herbert entered the room, and joined us, standing behind me. My mother drew out one of the satin-lined drawers of the central compartment, and we all bent down to look into the little *cachette* behind it, in which she placed the roll of notes. Then the drawer was replaced, a slight click was heard, and my mother shewed us how the spring played.

'There lie Alice's household gods for the present,' said she. 'We will not begin our purchases until Herbert has left us.'

'Certainly not,' said my brother.

My mother closed the door of the cabinet, and turned the carved silver key, but did not remove it.

'Will you not take the key out?' I said.

'No, my dear; there's no occasion. There's no one to suspect us of having money in the house, here; and if there were, the key, which is always there, being removed, would be the first ground for suspicion.'

That evening was not a happy one, though my brother was with us, though my Arthur was with us, and though the nearness of our marriage was in our thoughts and speech. Herbert and Arthur did not get on well together. Herbert was unaccountably irritated by certain questions which Arthur put to him concerning the nature of the business which could possibly flourish during a siege, and could require him to return to Paris during the reign, now commenced, of civil war—and cut him short, rudely, almost violently. I actually caught myself wishing once or twice that Arthur were going back to town that night, instead of sleeping at the inn, and that he would stay away while Herbert remained with us. Arthur left us earlier than usual, and I went to my room, having heard Herbert tell my mother that he should soon send her away, as he had several letters to write.

When Arthur came to breakfast, the next morning at ten, I met him with strange and unpleasant news. My brother had received some communication by the early post, which obliged him to go to London immediately. He had taken a hurried leave of us, and had gone away, giving us no clear indication of his business, and no definite promise of a speedy return. My mother was quite knocked up

and I felt an amount of apprehension which a few reasonable words from Arthur lessened. He would not listen to my suggestion that Herbert might possibly have to return to Paris in the interests of his incomprehensible business, and he exerted himself so successfully to cheer up my mother, that we were soon ready to acknowledge that we had made too much of an easily explicable accident.

When Arthur and I returned in the afternoon from a long walk, we found my mother at her writing-table, with a little pile of sovereigns beside her desk. She asked Arthur if it was too late, the day being Saturday, to get a money-order at the post-office. He replied that it was too late, whereupon she remarked that it was very annoying, as she especially wished to avoid any delay in sending five pounds to the person to whom she was then writing. Arthur suggested that she could register a letter, though she could not get a money-order.

'But,' said my mother, touching the sovereigns with her pen, 'I have not got a five-pound note.'

'Yes, you have,' said Arthur; 'there are two five-pound notes among those I brought you yesterday. Put one of them in your letter, and we will take it to the post at once.'

My mother rose, opened the cabinet, pulled out the drawer, and found the cachette empty.

We looked at one another in silence. I don't know what were our first impressions, but I said, after a minute, nervously: 'Herbert has taken the notes, for a joke, to frighten us.'

Arthur, who was deadly pale, said nothing; but my mother reminded me that there would have been no joke in Herbert's taking the notes, since only an accident had led to our knowing that they were not there; otherwise, we might have remained in ignorance of their disappearance for days, or even weeks. It was clearly a theft, and what were we to do? There was no sign that any one had entered the house from without; but, though we are 'lone women' for the most part, we habitually take few precautions, trusting rather to the fact that we have little worth stealing, than to bolts and bars. Naturally, suspicion divided itself between our two servants, both newly come to us, and of whom we knew little. One of them, the housemaid, had gone to my mother's room early on this same morning, and complaining of illness, had requested leave of absence for a few days; which had been granted; and she was to go away in the evening. All this was discussed among us hurriedly, and I remarked that Arthur continued to be deadly pale, and seemed strangely absent; but when I said so, he made me a sign with his hand, and told me to go on; he was listening to all I said, and at the same time thinking. Here I need not dwell upon my impressions, but go on to facts. It was agreed, upon Arthur's advice, that we should not appear to be aware of the loss we had sustained, but should permit Hannah to leave the house at the appointed time. Arthur was to go to London immediately, to communicate with the police, and have a detective in readiness to watch Hannah on her arrival. I undertook to see that she really left for London at the hour indicated; to inform Mr Harding of what had occurred, and to let us hear from him immediately. My mother assented to all this; she seemed bewildered. Arthur gave us these directions rapidly, and calmly, but he still had his absent look, and he was still quite pale. When he held me in his arms,

and whispered farewell words to me, I felt that he was shivering slightly, and then I remembered the trouble he was in about Mr Burton, and said: 'O Arthur, Mr Burton! You will have to see him—two painful tasks instead of one.'

'Yes, yes,' he replied; 'but I cannot do anything about it to-day; Burton must wait.'

In another minute he had left us, to sit down, in stupefied silence for some time, and then to get through the hours of waiting as best we might. I kept my mother out of sight of the servants, and they suspected nothing. In the evening, I walked to the station with Hannah, on the pretext that I expected a parcel down from town, and saw her off by the train. The night passed; the morning came, bringing a note from Arthur: 'Hannah is under surveillance, but nothing has yet been discovered. Be patient, and betray no uneasiness; all will be right. You may not hear from me for a week, but do not be troubled; I shall be attending to this matter.' Nothing could be less explanatory; but we had to bear it; we could do nothing more. I wrote to Arthur, to his chambers in the Temple, as usual; but I did not hear from him for a week: this caused me no uneasiness, though it vexed me. We had trouble upon trouble at this time. My poor mother was dreadfully knocked up by receiving a few lines from Herbert, without date or address, telling her that the urgent claims of his business obliged him to return to Paris at once, that, fortunately he had provided for such a contingency, and would be permitted to enter the city, then held by the Communists, and besieged by the Versailles troops, without difficulty or danger. This letter almost put our loss out of my mother's mind, and filled us with dread. Time passed; the week lengthened itself to ten days, and Arthur made no sign. We went to London, to his chambers; he was not there; he had not been there since he had written to me; his clerk knew nothing about him. We returned home in the utmost perplexity, and that evening Mr Burton arrived. He had heard absolutely nothing of Arthur. We broke through the injunction to secrecy which Arthur had laid upon us, and told Mr Burton what had happened. He has kept us alive, I believe, by his active sympathy. We have never heard of Arthur since; he has disappeared; no trace of him is to be found; and Mr Burton has found out that no notice was given to the police in London of the theft of my mother's money; that Arthur was not seen by any of the authorities, and that he did not call on Mr Harding. We are in despair. Hannah came quietly back in ten days, and the household affairs go on as usual. We do not know what to do about her; but, as Mr Burton says, she is under our eyes and under our hand, if she should be 'wanted,' as the police call it, for this matter.

The civil war is raging in Paris; all sorts of horrors are predicted when the regular troops shall be ready to enter the city, and the Commune be driven to desperation. Worst of all, to me, my brother has replied to my mother's letter, in which she told him of our distress, in a tone which I feel I can never forgive, by an insinuation whose absurdity only equals its baseness. He dares to suggest that Arthur took the money himself. He reminds my mother that Arthur was in trouble on that dreadful day on account of a friend to whom he had hoped to take a sum of money; and he says: 'The way out of this mystery is the common-sense

way. Digby borrowed your bank-notes, without leave, trusting to getting the means of replacing them before you would have missed them. He has not got the money to replace them, and he is keeping back until he does get it, when he will turn up, and make things pleasant with any handy lie. If this does not happen, we must only conclude that he has been robbed of the money, and murdered by the thief. Depend upon it, my dear mother, one or other of these things is true, and the main fact in either, that Digby took the money. There was no one else to take it, in fact, *except me!* After all, Digby may very pardonably have looked upon it as a harmless anticipation of a loan. The money was to be Alice's, and therefore his.' To my unspeakable misery, this letter has produced an impression unfavourable to Arthur on my mother's mind. She would gladly forgive him, to have him back; but she believes him guilty, and the result is, mutual estrangement in the midst of our common suffering. Mr Burton has not told me what he thinks, nor has he asked me for my solution of the mystery. He has asked me only for the narrative which I conclude here.

EMIGRATION TO NEW ZEALAND.

A SHORT time ago (September 6th), we drew attention to New Zealand as a colony to which certain classes of intending emigrants might advantageously proceed; Otago, in the southern division of the colony, being more specially referred to. The advantages distinctly pointed out were—a free passage to persons deemed eligible; certainty of employment at good wages on arrival; a pleasant and salubrious climate; and domicile in a respectable law-abiding community. We drew no comparison between New Zealand and the United States as a field for immigrants, nor do we intend to do so now, further than to say that, from all accounts, vast numbers of artisans and labourers in the chief American cities are at present thrown out of work by a severe financial collapse—a condition of things that would be painfully aggravated by any inflow of operatives from the old country.

Since specifying some of the circumstances which recommend New Zealand to favourable consideration, we have received fresh information from a friend in the colony on which every reliance may be placed. In his letter, dated from Wellington, 23d November 1873, he says: 'We are now offering free passages to all who can pass the selection. We do not want paupers or infirm people, but persons able and willing to work of all kinds are in urgent demand, especially good domestic servants. A ship, the *Helen Denny*, came in last week from London, with one hundred and thirty immigrants—a mere drop in the bucket. I went yesterday to Mount Cook Barracks to see them. They were a very tidy, respectable body. Some girls from London were among them. One, a smart little lassie, aged seventeen, had been in service since she was eleven. In her last place she got three shillings per week. Here, she was already engaged at ten shillings. The climate seemed to strike them. One also remarked: "How clean

all the people are!" This does not strike us who are used to it, but any one who knows the back slums of every big town in England and Scotland must observe a marked contrast in the appearance of the people in our colonial towns. All dress well, and the women of the very humblest rank, I think, extravagantly so. But wages being good and employment abundant, and no accumulation of a depraved idle class, squalor and poverty are not to be seen. It is undoubtedly pleasing to see the tidy smartness of the young women, married and single. People are here more simple in their habits than is the case at Melbourne. There the overplus of wealth, along with a degree of recklessness, have led to an artificial and bloated style of living. Carriages, and luxurious houses are there the rage—a result being that many get into difficulties. Here, things are taken more naturally. As regards immigration, I inclose a summary of wages offered to artisans and others from a local paper.'

From the long printed summary referred to we can only make a few extracts, as follows: 'At Wellington, married couples receive £50 to £70 per annum, and found; carpenters, 10s. to 11s. per day; blacksmiths, 10s. to 12s. per day; painters, &c. 10s. per day; attendants, £52 per annum, and found. Canterbury much the same; female servants, £20 to £30 per annum, and found. Otago, similar wages for artisans—dairy-maids, £40 to £52, and found; farm servants, £55 to £60 per annum, and found; female cooks, £45 to £50 per annum, and found; general servants, £30 to £35, and found; gardeners, 25s. per week, and found; housemaids, £20 to £25 per annum, and found; labourers, 8s. a day; miners, 10s. a day; ploughmen, £55 to £60 per annum, and found; shepherds, £55 to £65 per annum, and found.' Some information is added, to the effect that, on the arrival of two vessels at Otago with immigrants, 'all were engaged immediately. Probably another hundred men would have been hired eagerly.'

Having perfect confidence in these details, as well as in the salubrity and agreeable climate of New Zealand, we cannot hesitate to repeat our recommendations of one or other of the provinces of that colony, as peculiarly favourable for the reception of intending emigrants of the labouring class who are desirous of bettering their condition. In our former article on the subject, it was stated that 'applications in all cases should be made to the agents in London, Edinburgh, and other large towns, whose offices may be easily discovered.' On consideration, we think that additional facilities should be offered. Many, we fear, will not take the trouble to seek out these offices; nor, from the vast number of visionary schemes afloat, is much confidence placed in prospectuses, advertisements, and newspaper notices. The New Zealand authorities seem to be at their wits' end to procure sufficiency of labour. What they should do is to depute some trustworthy person practically acquainted with the circumstances to bring tho

subject, by public lecture, under the notice of localities, with power to make such selections from the labouring population as may seem advisable. In short, *personal*, not merely literary exertion, is necessary. In this, as in some other matters, the obtrusive is the only effective principle. W. C.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER III.—THE BROTHERS.

THERE are some natures that never count the cost of anything they can obtain on credit, but think only of the gratification of the moment; but this could not be said with justice of Richard Milbank; he thought only of his own personal gratification, it is true, but he sometimes looked forward to it a week, or even a month, in advance. He had come that afternoon, just as Mr Thorne had foreseen, while yet a chance of prosperity remained to him, to persuade Maggie to become his wife; and, if possible, upon the instant—that is as soon as the law would permit them to marry. Of 'saving common-sense,' he had none, and even his wits (of which he had plenty) were rendered almost wholly useless to him, from his excessive egotism. Having decided upon some line of conduct conducing to his own pleasure, he did not give himself the trouble to place himself in the position of the person through whom the pleasure was to be obtained—an omission that forms the social safeguard of the world, which would else be at the feet of the Selfish. Yet even he perceived that to have put off his proposal until he was actually pronounced a beggar by his uncle's will, would lay him open to some suspicion of selfishness. As it was, the meagre hope of his having been left something by old Matthew Thurle, was the rag with which he covered his shamelessness. He had offered himself to Maggie, whether he should be rich or poor, and what more, said he to himself, could be expected of any man?

He was very fond of Maggie—after his fashion: prouder of her, when she was present, than of any other girl in the world; but in her absence, her image did not by any means so monopolise his heart as to prevent it receiving other impressions. Those who were the most charitable to Richard Milbank's faults, lamented his 'extreme susceptibility'; others called him a dissolute and abandoned fellow. As to his protestations of penitence and resolutions of amendment, it would have been a compliment to call them moonshine; they were not even a genuine reflection of virtue. He adopted them as expressions most likely to please Maggie's ear; just as, had she been of a more frivolous disposition, he would have used the language of flattery or passion. If there was any recognised calling in life in which he would have succeeded, it would have been that of the stage-lover; for, whether the object of his adoration had been a 'singing chambermaid' or a 'serious widow,' he would have played his part equally well. The wits of most sharp people run to making money, and there stagnate, as in a pond of yellow mud; but those of Richard ran to making love. They had also another channel—which the virtuous vaguely call 'gambling transactions:' but in this he was not so successful, though equally diligent. This man, however, was not a mere selfish voluptuary. When passion was aroused, he became reckless of all consequences, not only to others, but

himself. Disappointment did not sour him—for vinegar is not made in a moment—but rendered him at once both desperate and dangerous. To conclude this slight sketch of Mr Richard Milbank's character, we must add in fairness, that, in addition to the great attraction of his looks, he was what is termed (by a not very discerning class of critics, however) exceedingly 'good company,' and was the idol of his particular public—which was to be found for the most part within the walls of the *Sans Souci* club, at Hilton, and was confined even there to two apartments, the card-room and the billiard-room. It is thither that he is now walking, with a face more than ordinarily flushed, and a look of triumph in his large blue eyes, which curiously contrasts with the frown above them.

'She is mine,' mutters he to himself, 'though not on my own terms. She will keep her promise now, no matter what happens. Though John may have robbed me of the money that should have been mine, he will miss the prize he has chiefly aimed at—and I shall win it—Well; what is it?' The last words are uttered aloud, in a rough, rude tone, and addressed to one who has stopped him in the street—a man of about his own age, tall and fair, and comely as himself, yet by no means like him in other respects. The unhealthy flush upon Richard's cheek is in this case merely a wholesome colour, slightly heightened, however, by the present rencontre; the flowing beard is absent, and the brown hair does not curl so crisply; it is long, and has the appearance of being thrown back, like the hair of angels carved in stone: the expression of the face, too, if not angelic, is patient, tender, and serious.

'I want to have a few words with you, Richard.'

'If you want to have words with me, I will not balk you,' answered the other scornfully. 'But I shall not pick and choose for *mine*, I warn you.'

'You shall not have the pretence of quarrel, brother, if I can help it. I wish to speak to you for your own good.'

'That is so like Mr Morality!' returned Richard, with a sneering laugh. 'You are always Harry the good boy, and I Tommy the bad. "For my own good," forsooth! It was for my good, I suppose, that you gained my uncle's ear, and poisoned it against me, so that he has cut me off with a shilling! "Being thus without the means of self-indulgence, my dear brother Richard," you say to yourself, "must needs become temperate, and diligent, and sober, and will have cause to bless me for the *good* I have done him."—Bah, you hypocrite!'

'You do me wrong, brother; but to that I am accustomed'—

'There he goes again!' interrupted Richard: 'it is Tartufe himself: "Pray, spit upon me; I like to be spat upon." Upon my soul, John, I have half a mind to gratify you.' And with an exclamation of disgust and loathing, he spat upon the ground.

'You will not allow me to talk with you, and keep my self-respect, it seems,' continued John Milbank, the colour in his cheek as deep by this time as that his brother wore; 'I will therefore give my warning, and have done with it. You have coloured clothes, I see; let me advise you to put on black ones; and, at all events—unless you wish to learn better ways in the school of

adversity in the manner you just spoke of—do not omit to attend the funeral to-morrow.

'What, in the Fiend's name, do you mean? Is it possible that you have the assurance to dictate to me as to what I think proper to wear, or to do! Why, one would think you had seen our uncle's will, and, as his heir, were already lordling it over your beggared brother.'

'I have not seen his will; but I know—no matter how—so much of its contents as to say that there is hope for you yet, if you will but pay a decent respect to his memory.'

'What! he'll be there himself, will he, the unnatural old scoundrel, and execute a codicil? I defy him to do that, for, under the circumstances, he must needs set fire to the parchment. If he could have taken his money with him, as somebody says, it would all have melted by this time.'

'Matthew Thurlie is passed out of our judgment,' returned John Milbank gravely, 'and I will not hear him slandered. I have cleared my conscience, and given you your warning: whether you take it or not, lies with yourself, Richard.' He was about to move away, when the other laid his hand upon his arm.

'One moment, John; you have forgotten something.'

'Have I so? What is it?'

'You have forgotten to finish off your little speech: after the words "Cleared my conscience, and given you warning," you should have added: "And now I wash my hands of you, Tommy." The hypocrites never conclude anything, you know, without washing their hands.'

For an instant, when his brother had said: 'You have forgotten something,' John Milbank had been in hopes that he was touched by the effort which he had honestly made to avert his worldly ruin; but one look at his mocking face had been sufficient to dissipate this hope, and he had turned upon his heel before the last insulting words had been fully spoken. Richard watched his retiring form with a grim smile.

'That is a man who, avoiding wines and dainty meats—which inflame the flesh—is said to live on porridge, and he might have saved his breath to cool it. Yes, yes, my friend; it is likely enough you should wish to be friends, knowing how you have robbed me. It would be a fine thing, indeed, if you could oust me from the old man's will, and live like a lord at Rosebank, while I am a pauper, and yet keep yourself on good terms with your victim! Better still, good Master John, if you could take wicked Tommy's sweetheart away from him, and marry her yourself—also for his good, no doubt. If it had not been that I had got the whip-hand of him there, I should not have kept my temper so easily. What the deuce did the fellow mean with his "There is hope for you yet?" Does he call the chance of a five pound note to buy a mourning-ring with "hope?" Confound him! What does he mean by telling me to change these clothes, and be at the funeral to-morrow? Why, he means to save his own credit, no doubt. If I should not be there, it would be a protest against my uncle's injustice, and indirectly against himself, for having taken advantage of it. That is as clear as crystal. As it happens, Brother John, I do mean to be at the funeral, though not because of anything that you have said. Ah, if you only knew whose pretty face and cherry lips had persuaded

me, you would not perhaps have been quite so smooth-tongued! If I could only have got her to marry me to-day, and appear among them all to-morrow, with Maggie tucked under my arm! That would be a triumph worth all Uncle Thurlie's money, and would have snuffed out Mr John's exultation pretty completely. However, it's almost as good as that already. I'm in luck to-day, and shall go in for a "plunge" on the strength of it.' Then, sticking his hat rakishly on one side, and whistling gaily, he pursued his way to the club.

CHAPTER IV.—'THE SANS SOUCI.'

'The Club' at Hilton, as it was designated by its frequenters, and rightly so, since there was no other similar establishment in the town, was a building so large and handsome that it might have dared comparison with many of its metropolitan brethren; but this scale of grandeur had necessitated that its members should be more numerous than select. While, therefore, it numbered amongst them the parliamentary representatives of the borough, and many scions of the county families, and almost all the members, male, of the local aristocracy, it was forced to extend itself beyond these limits, and to admit individuals of inferior rank, and whose qualifications for club society were chiefly comprised in their ability to pay the entrance-money and subscriptions. It had been fondly hoped that the considerable expense of these would have deterred 'the tag-rag and bob-tail'—as the large manufacturers in Hilton were given to designate their less wholesale brethren—from desiring to be admitted to the *Sans Souci*, whereas, this was the very class that was found most ambitious of the honour, and who paid their money with the greatest cheerfulness. On the first starting of the club, a few of them had been admitted, as we have said, from necessity; but these, like 'the small end of the wedge,' had made way for the entrance of their friends *en masse*, and when the more aristocratic members would have closed the flood-gates, they had found the stream of democracy too strong for them; they were outvoted in their own palace, and from thenceforth condemned to confine their exclusiveness to shrugs of the shoulders and liftings of the eyelids. Far be it from us to suggest that 'lower dockyard people,' to use Mr Jingle's definition of social inequality, are necessarily inferior in good behaviour to 'upper dockyard people,' retail folks to wholesale, or the 'poor but honest' class of the community generally to 'swells' of any description. But the interlopers at the *Sans Souci* were of a peculiar and objectionable kind. They were not the lesser order of manufacturers themselves, but their sons and nephews, who aspired to 'sink the shop,' and who endeavoured to shew themselves the equals of their social superiors by out-bidding them in the extravagance of their club dinners, and the amount of their stakes at cards. Old Matthew Thurlie, for instance, a much respected man in his way, but in a comparatively small way of business as an employer of labour, would never have dreamed of thrusting himself into the society of the magnets of Hilton; whereas, Richard Milbank, his nephew, having been left by his father with a few hundreds a year of his own, had joined the *Sans Souci* on the very first opportunity, and had spent and lost more money there than most of its frequenters. The

club in its outward aspect was still as respectable as its founders could have desired: the dining-room, indeed, was occasionally occupied by parties of young men who loved champagne, not wisely, but too well, and whose loud laughter would cause some potent and reverend senior, taking his port in dignified solitude, to level at them his double eye-glasses in reprehension or contempt; but the well-stocked library was as silent as the grave, and much less generally tenanted; the strangers' room froze your blood with its cold seclusion; and in the stately drawing-room, save for the falling leaf (of a newspaper), or the dropping of a coal in the fireplace, there was an unbroken hush at all times. It was to these rooms that the original members of the *Sans Souci* for the most part confined themselves. They knew nothing, or affected to know nothing, of the 'goings on' in the card-room and the billiard-room. In the former, afternoon play had been of late established, a thing which, common enough in London, is thought in itself to be an improper proceeding in the provinces, and the stakes were rumoured to be high—very much higher than the rules of the club countenanced, which, indeed, were set at defiance altogether. The committee had been appealed to, it was true, for the correction for this innovation; but *quis custodiet, &c.* who shall commit a committee man? The majority of the executive of the *Sans Souci*, as it was now constituted, were sinners in this respect themselves.

It is up to the card-room, three stories high, and placed, thereby, out of the supervision of venerable seniors, unless possessed of respiratory powers seldom allotted to their epoch of life, that Richard Milbank takes his way. It is an apartment that affects a dim and chastened gloom, that might seem adapted to quite another purpose. The blinds are drawn down over the windows, and the only light from within is that afforded by wax candles fastened into the card-tables, and surmounted by green shades, so as to shield the glare from the eyes of the players. Many of them are already assembled, for Richard, usually a most punctual attendant, has been delayed to-day by his visit to Maggie. A chorus of reproving voices greets his appearance.

'Dick Milbank late for school; you shall have a bad mark,' cries one florid-faced old gentleman, the Falstaff of the card-room, Mr Roberts. He was once a banker in Hilton, but having had some disagreement with his firm, retired from it, and has had for years no other occupation than that in which he is now engaged.

'His bad mark is to come to-morrow.—Is not that so, Dick?' inquired another, looking up for a moment from his cards. This is Lawyer Gresham, whose presence in the *Sans Souci* is not owing to its new blood at all (upon which circumstance he secretly prides himself), but to the influence of a certain borough member, said to be much indebted for his seat for Hilton to this gentleman's electioneering skill. The clever tactics that have stood Mr Gresham in such good social stead during election time, his tact, his knowledge of mankind, his finesse, are fully as useful to him at the whist-table; but even though so successful at that game, he would yet be popular, but for a certain malicious humour which he cannot control.

'Attend to your game, and don't remind a man of his misfortunes, Gresham,' says the ex-banker

rebudefully. 'Besides, though the show of hands is certainly against our friend, he may come out at the head of the poll, after all.—May you not, Dick? You don't wear your uncle's colours, though, I see, eh?'

Everybody laughs at Falstaff's sally, which is directed against the new-comer's gay clothes.

'I shall put them on to-morrow at the hustings,' answers Richard audaciously.

'Your brother is wearing them already,' continued Mr Roberts: 'he was looking so very sombre in the street to-day, that it struck me he would have no woeful looks left for to-morrow's ceremony, and I had a good mind to recommend him to black his face. However, I am sure I hope, as we all do, that he will not play Jacob to your Esau, and rob you of your birthright.'

'Hear, hear!' answered more than one voice, for Richard, as we have already said, was really popular in his own circle, and besides, he had very bad luck at cards.

'Yes, indeed, let us hope it will all come right,' observed Mr Gresham, 'for we shall all be sorry to lose you, my good fellow.'

This was a barbed shaft, for everybody knew that if Richard Milbank should be disinherited by his uncle he would have no more money to venture.

'Come and cut in here, and win Gresham's money; that's the only way to stop his mouth, Dick,' cried Mr Roberts good-humouredly; 'we are playing "pounds and fivepounds".'

Sovereign points and five pounds on the rubber are heavy stakes for any gentleman in a small way of business, and Richard generally confined himself to the points without the bet, which was euphoniously termed 'flat pounds'; but, as we have seen, he considered himself in luck's way to-day, and had come to the club with the intention of having 'a plunge'—a phrase which describes not only a cold bath, but also a determination to gamble. He therefore touched the whist-table with his hand, in token that he intended to cut in when the rubber should be concluded.

As he did so, 'Dick, a word with you!' whispered a voice in his ear.

The whisperer was one of his most intimate associates, a young man of his own age, very dark and swarthy, and of herculean proportions, by name Dennis Blake. This man had led the same sort of life as Richard himself; had gone a little faster, perhaps, and sunk a little lower in the mud, but of that there were no outward traces in his case. He had a frame and constitution that, for the present, bade defiance to all inroads.

'Look here, Dick: it's against the rules, you know,' observed this gentleman, taking Milbank aside, 'for you to cut in at that table.'

'Rules! What rules?' inquired the other impatiently, as though rules were not very binding in his eyes, at all events, but that any which might interfere with his own pleasure were, *ipso facto*, absurd and powerless.

'Well, it was settled by the committee, last night, old fellow, that if a man had not paid his debts of the previous day, he was not to sit down to play. I don't refer to your debts to me, you know,' added the speaker hastily, perceiving Richard's face to darken till it almost reached the complexion of his own: 'of course I know you're

as straight as a die, but there are other creditors of yours here who might make themselves unpleasant. I thought I would put you on your guard."

Richard was well aware that this own peculiar friend of his, Dennis Blake—"Denny," as he sometimes called him, 'for love and euphony'—was speaking two words for himself, and one for the 'other creditors'; yet it would have hardly suited him to say so, since it must needs have provoked an open rupture. Moreover, he wanted to play, and his wish was ever a law to him.

"Oh, thanks," said he dryly; "but I think I'll risk it. Whatever happens, I shall settle with everybody to-morrow, you know, yourself included."

Richard Milbank did really intend to 'settle with everybody,' if he found himself mentioned to any considerable figure in his uncle's will: if not, he would also settle with them, in the sense of never entering the doors of the club again, or having a word to say to them. He had still a few hundreds left—for he was not so foolish as to denude himself of ready-money, if it could possibly be avoided—enough to keep himself for a week or two, and afterwards, when he should have persuaded Maggie to marry him, as he felt confident of doing, to defray the expenses of his honeymoon; and beyond that period, it was not his nature to concern himself.

"Well, if you really are going to pay to-morrow, Dick, honour bright," hesitated Blake; "only, the notion *here* is" (and the speaker looked about him with a depreciating air) "that it is all up with your expectations. You can't wonder at fellows looking sharp after their money: it's every one for himself, you know, in this room."

"Is it?" replied Richard bitterly. "It seems to me, Blake, that some of you fellows are just a little greedy. You have had a good deal of my money among you."

"That may be: but if they have won of you, they have lost to others."

It was curious to remark how this gentleman would persist in putting 'they' for 'you': the thing that he perhaps still called his conscience, dead to ordinary questions of right and wrong, had still some vitality in this particular matter, and taxed him with greed and harshness to his friend. It was still more curious to observe how quietly the other took his interference. Neither advice nor warning would Richard Milbank have submitted to for an instant from lips the most reverend and authoritative; and as for menace, he would have resented it with the most passionate audacity. He was savage with Blake, of course, and would have discharged his obligation to him by pushing him over an alpine precipice had a safe opportunity offered, with a great deal of satisfaction; but the uppermost desire in his mind at present was to have his 'plunge'; and the whim of the moment, as usual with him, was stronger than aught else. Without replying to his friend's last rejoinder, he moved towards the table, and as the rubber chanced to be just then brought to a conclusion, he cut in. It is not necessary to follow his fortunes; suffice it to say that, like the majority of presentiments that occur to us (though we only remember those that are fulfilled), his notion that he was in luck that day was not realised with respect to the possession of good cards. He 'put on' the money—as gamblers (most anomalously) do, with the intention of 'pulling it off' again—but it was always pulled off

by his adversaries. In the end, he lost all he had in his pocket, and increased his already considerable debt to Dennis Blake by fifty pounds. This last, it was true, concerned him very little, since, if things went badly for him in the will, he never intended to pay him a shilling. But not daring to play on credit with any one else, he had encroached upon the sum he had designed for the expenses of his honeymoon, which would now have to be curtailed to three weeks at farthest. Even to reckless Richard, the future looked gloomy that evening, as he took his way to the Jew clothier's to furnish himself forth with a suit of 'inconsolables,' as the shopman termed it, against the all-important morrow.

AN ORNITHOLOGICAL RAMBLE ON THE LINCOLNSHIRE COAST.

For the genuine and practical ornithologist, there is no season more favourable for his outdoor observations than the month of October. This, perhaps, is more the case on the eastern side of the kingdom, on whose extensive and very diversified seaboard there is, throughout this month, an almost daily arrival of migratory wanderers to be noted—either winter visitants, on our shores, in our fields, hedge-rows and woodlands, or mere travellers, tarrying awhile, for shorter or longer periods, before resuming their flight to milder and less variable climes. The day we had chosen for our purpose (October 21st) was in one respect anything but a fortunate one. As in early morning we drive towards the coast, along the straight and ugly marsh road, fenced in with its parallel lines of dark and sluggish drain, appearances are the reverse of cheerful. To right and left stretches the interminable flat, scarce relieved from utter dreariness by solitary farmsteads, standing at wide intervals apart, each with its attendant line of gigantic ricks—such corn-ricks as we never see out of Lincolnshire or fertile Holderness—looming in the gray morning like the hulls of a stranded Armada; beyond these, the church towers of marsh villages, with their surroundings of trees and houses, grouped closely together, and apparently covering but little space in the great plain—mere oases in this marsh desert.

For leagues no other trees did mark
The level waste, the rounding gray.

Over all, a sky of rolling rain-cloud, broken along the eastern and sea horizon by an angry streak of sunrise, crimson and flaming—

A fiery dawing wild with wind.

The wind is cold and cutting—damp and raw with the coming rain—north-west at present, but backing slowly to southward, and then to south-east—a most certain sign of a wet day.

The shivering cattle gather in groups at the corners of the big pastures, with their backs turned to the drifting storm; and under the drain-bank, a pair of black two-year-old cart colts, their long sweeping tails pressed closely to their thighs, are endeavouring to gain shelter to leeward of an old gnarled hawthorn: vain attempt, for the wind drives the rain through the bush, thick as it is, scattering the red and yellow leaves, yet making the clusters of bright haws to shine and glisten like bunches of coral.

As to birds, as yet, we have seen scarcely any, except the hoodie, Denmark crow, or gray crow, for the rogues boasts many an *alias*—a very recent arrival, coming from the second week to the end of October—a bird wary and precise in his movements, rarely extending his travels very far inland, but giving preference to the marshy districts of the east coast, and the muddy fore-shores of our great tidal rivers. With a *yhit, yhit, yhit*, the little brown pipits, birds of the muirland, the mountain, and the marsh, flit before us along the side of the big drains; we notice one much darker than the rest, which we believe is a closely allied species, the shore pipit. The lark tries to soar and sing, but has no heart to lose himself in the clouds on such a morning, and there is no rising sun to greet, so he rapidly descends to join his mates amid the yellow stubble. At this season, immense flocks of larks appear on the east coast, coming from the continent. We have occasionally seen the salt marshes, after a wild night, literally swarming with them.

Above, in the gray mist and rain, we hear the chatter of a flock of fieldfares, passing from the coast, to the woods and hedgerows of the inclosed and well timbered district skirting the wold hills; these birds have probably arrived during the night, and are now moving inland. Were it not for their familiar cry, we might easily have mistaken them for a flight of missel thrushes.

At last, the long, straight, and wearisome road comes to an end, and we pull up against a huge lock-pit, the main outfall for the marsh district, where the great system of drainage enters the sea: hard by this is a lonely little tavern, the last house on the coast. On such a morning it has a most desolate and dreary aspect. Nor are appearances improved as we gaze inside at the one cheerless, brick-paved, fireless room, the floor a foot or more below the level of the surrounding marsh, with the walls to half their height green and mouldy with exuding damp. There is a vault-like smell of decayed wood about the place. Adjoining are some tumble-down, ramshackle outbuildings and stables. The whole place has such a comfortless, forsaken look, that we are not sorry to turn our face seaward, notwithstanding the rain is coming down in a steady persistent manner, which leaves no doubt of its long continuance.

Beyond the lock-pit, skirting each side of the big drain, and then bending suddenly both to the right and left, is a long lone grassy mound, which looks not unlike the face of a battery, were it not that it extends as far as we can see in each direction. This is the sea-dike or embankment, without whose protection vain would be the efforts of man to cultivate the rich loam, or graze those lovely green pastures we have for the last half-hour been driving across.

Beyond the embankment, but at a great distance, so extensive is the coast, we can just distinguish the masts of more than one hopelessly stranded vessel. In the outfall on our left are lying, half-buried in the ooze, for the tide is out, two keels, for so the vessels are called, which monopolise a considerable portion of the coasting-trade of the Humber.

A dark-looking bird, a little larger than a snipe, rises with a loud whistle from a sedge-fringed pool in an adjoining field. It is the green sand-piper, a

beautiful, harmless, and highly ornamental bird; but, from its strong aromatic flavour, totally unfitted for the table. It hatches its young in the north of Europe, and the eggs have never, we believe, been found in this country; although we have strong reasons for thinking a pair or two occasionally do remain with us. Indeed, the nidification of the green sandpiper was, till late years, a mystery; it is now known that it deposits its four eggs in old deserted nests of other birds, in trees, and at a considerable altitude, and some distance from the nearest water. How the young are conveyed to the ground by the parent birds, is yet an ornithological puzzle. Perhaps, as with the woodcock, which has been seen to carry its young down at evening from the woods to their feeding-grounds, the young one snugly tucked under the thighs of the parent bird.

A heron rises slowly from the next drain, thrusts back his head, stretching downwards at the same time his rudder-like legs, and goes sailing away to windward, with regular beats or pulsations of his rounded concave wings. How slowly and sedately he seems to fly, and yet the Duke of Argyll tells us, in *The Reign of Law*, that these apparently slowly moving pinions seldom make less than from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty downward strokes in a minute.

But here are the 'fitties,' hundreds of acres in extent, running out beyond the embankment till they join the mud and sand of the level coast. They bear a striking contrast to the rich and fertile district we have just left: these have, however, one thing in common, a thick covering of green herbage; but the green of the 'fitties' is not the emerald green of rich feeding-grasses, but the green of such plants as love the salt waves and salt sea-breezes.

The uniformity of this otherwise level tract is everywhere broken by many a winding creek and water-course, passable only at low tide: pools of salt water, like miniature lakelets, and reflecting the dull sky, over everywhere dot the surface—the chosen feeding-grounds of many a wader; even as we step across the embankment, a redshank springs, and with a wild and querulous wail, arousing many a comrade feeding unseen in the muddy hollows, flies off seaward. But where is the sea? for at present it is not visible, although far off in the misty distance we hear its 'melancholy long-withdrawing roar.' Beyond the 'fitties,' a waste of sand stretches, for it is dead low-water, to an immense distance; and along the horizon, under that white haze, which clings pall-like to the damp earth, is the gray sea, moaning and chafing on the yellow beach.

A coast

Of ever-shifting sand, and far away
The phantom circle of a moaning sea.

Black, gaunt, and weird-like, the ribs of a wrecked vessel, with a sad tale of sorrow clinging to it, stand out like blasted stumps against the gray horizon; and the far-away call of the curlew comes to us plaintive and shrill as the wail of drowning men.

Immense flocks of knots, dunlins, and ringed plover, many hundreds together, are flying along the shore, now careering high aloft, and then instantaneously, as if by a preconcerted signal or word of command, shooting downwards, almost

brushing the sand in their headlong career; instantly flashing from brown to white, or white to brown, as they exhibit the lighter or darker shades of their plumage; looking, as they have most aptly been compared, like showers of newly coined shillings.

Two birds rise quickly from a creek, in the muddy ooze of which they have been feeding; one falls to our shot, a gray plover; the upper plumage speckled with golden drops, such as we see in the familiar golden plover of our marshes; and in this garb, which is peculiar to the young of the year only, by the careless observer, might easily be mistaken for the latter bird. The gray plover may, however, readily be distinguished, at all ages, from its golden congener, by having the axillary plume, as the tuft of feathers under the wing is named, at the junction of that member with the body, black; in the golden plover it is always white, or in young birds slightly marked with gray. The rump and upper tail coverts also in the gray plover are white, and a very conspicuous mark in flight; in the other, they are of the same colour as the back. The hind toe also is absent in the golden plover, but present in the gray. It is a curious fact, that the young of allied species frequently more closely resemble each other than do the adults. We shall see many gray plovers during our walk, as it is an abundant species on this coast; on the wing, we can always pick them out from any other waders, as we catch momentary glances between the beats of the wing of the inky black patch.

Our shot has aroused the vigilant redshanks; they are on the wing in parties of five to ten in various directions, their shrill warning cries keeping every other bird within hearing on the alert, and for the time we find it impossible to obtain another chance. Away in the direction of the old wreck we had seen a cluster of dark spots grouped together on a slight elevation on the sands: our small but powerful binocular shews they are some birds not unlike ducks, but we are yet too far off to be able to recognise them. By long manœuvring, partly assisted by a hollow in the sands, partly by masking our approach with the timbers of the wreck, we succeed in reaching a position within less than three hundred yards of our object; but it is no use: they have already got a notion that something is wrong, and all run together in a clump, sticking out their heads and necks in a most gooselike manner; by this, and their gait, at once betraying their genus—they are geese, small and dark-looking. As they get on the wing, we level, not our gun, but the binocular, and at once make them out—they are Brent geese, and the first we have seen this autumn. The weather may not be all that is quite agreeable. But what sportsman or naturalist minds weather? How the wind and rain come down—blowing, surging; we are already most uncomfortably wet about the legs and knees, partly by wading through so many creeks, partly from the drip from our waterproof. For the next half-hour we stand to leeward of the raking stern-post of the wrecked schooner. She lies half-buried in the shifting sand, which has formed quite a bank around; the black sea-soaked ribs, draped with pink fuel and bladder-wrack, having the scent of the salt sea upon them.

The last half hour, although we have been stationary, has not altogether been barren of

observation. Where the blue drift-clay crops up, we can make out with our glass numerous black-and-white birds, rather larger than woodcocks, having orange bills and legs. They are running briskly to and fro over the hard mud, foraging for various shell-fish; the fishermen call them 'seapies' or 'sea-woodcocks.' Their true name is the oyster-catcher, once nesting in considerable numbers on this coast; but of late years they have forsaken the district during the breeding-time, in consequence of the great destruction and plundering of their eggs.

Many gulls have gone lazily past in the direction of the Hail Sand. We have identified five of the common species on this coast—namely, the greater and lesser black-backed, the herring, the common, and the brown-headed gulls. Flocks, too, we have seen, of dunlin and ringed dotterel; and amongst the former, a few birds resembling dunlin, and rather longer and with sharper wings. They are curlew sandpipers, and rather rare waders on these shores. Many knots have also gone by, and we have shot half-a-dozen specimens, all young birds of the year, with the under parts tinted a lightish buff colour. These knots are to us always a source of wonder. They appear in the autumn in immense flocks on the sea-coasts of Great Britain and other countries, travelling as far south as the Mediterranean. In the spring, they return northward to their breeding-stations; and we have seen them late in May on the Humber mud-flats in their beautiful nuptial dress, having the under parts a rich ruddy chesnut. In this plumage they are totally unlike the familiar gray bird seen hanging in clusters during the late autumn or early winter months almost in any game-shop in our coast towns. This ruddy summer plumage is peculiar to several of our wading birds; it is assumed by both the bar-tailed and black-tailed godwits, by the sanderling, the curlew sandpiper, and the two phalaropes.

Within less than twenty yards of us, on the other side of the wreck, we can watch our feathered friends, by peeping through the black timbers; a pair of bar-tailed godwits are busily looking for their dinner in a salt pool; they keep probing the wet sand with their long, slightly recurved bills, occasionally extracting some species of annelid, which, before swallowing, is carefully washed by shaking it under the water; they are evidently a pair of old birds; the larger of the two, the female, still retaining traces of the ruddy summer dress.

Not the least interesting of our visitors is a little family party of sanderlings, which pitch close by, and commence immediately to run to and fro very rapidly over the hard-ribbed sand. Now one, now another, stays to pick up some small substance, and then commences running as rapidly as ever. We readily distinguish them from dunlin by the lighter gray of the upper parts, their snowy-white breasts, and short bills; and a nearer acquaintance would shew that they have no hind toe, as the dunlin has. We walk towards them, and they do not rise, but run on rapidly before us. We walk our best, yet still the little birds, seemingly without any effort, easily keep ahead; at last we break into a run, when the flock rise, and dash round, settling again a few hundred yards to the rear.

The more we think of the migratory flights of those small creatures, the more are we impressed

with the goodness and watchfulness of God over His glorious creation.

There's a path in the air, man may not know,
That guides them o'er the main;
And a voice in the winds, man may not hear,
Will call them home again.

For many hours flying against a strong south-west wind and a driving rain, small parties of hooded crows have been passing in; flying just above the sea, they came heavily and wearily, and never swerved a yard to avoid us. We might have dropped many had they been worth the cost of a cartridge.

And now for home again. What a dreary walk it was; not along the shore, for the tide had cut us off; but, as the crow flies, straight for the inn, four miles away across the bleak rain-swept plain. Sometimes we jump the marsh-drains in our course; at others, which are too big, we have to make long detours. The wind has backed into the east, and the rain was coming down in torrents, and before we reach the not-to-be-despised shelter, we had experienced the full force of Kingsley's lines:

Dreary east winds howling o'er us;
Clay lands knee-deep spread before us:
Mire and ice, and snow and sleet,
Aching backs and frozen feet.

And so ended a very wet, but very pleasant ramble.

ODDS AND ENDS:

FROM DR ROBERT CHAMBERS'S SCRAP-BOOK.

BORES.—London swarms with bores—men, and women too, possessed of one idea, to which they devote their whole mind, or such part of it as business allows them to spare. Sometimes the ideas get no further than matter of talk, with which people are at all opportunities bored; but more frequently they assume shape in pamphlets, copies of which are pressed on all with whom they get acquainted. I know one of these geniuses, who carries a stock of pamphlets in a leather reticule, suspended by a belt round his neck, ready for distribution wherever he happens to go. A public meeting which has just broken up, and is in-course of dispersal, gives him a splendid opportunity of emptying his wallet. The prevalent ideas of these bores have in some cases a hue of plausibility, but as often they are visionary crotchets. Mr M—, artist, has a scheme for economising the sewage of London, which has gone through several transformations, and proposes to save the Thames from impurity, and redeem some millions a year at least. Mr P—, another artist, has a new idea about perspective. Speak on any other subject, and you find him a rational man; but mention perspective, and you are in for a two hours' lecture. He would represent the pillars of a colonnade bent outwards at the middle, as necessary for rigid truth. It is of no use to tell him that the eye would be offended by it. 'Your eyes must be educated to see it in the right way.' He once gave a lecture, which went on very well till he broached this idea, and then the audience set off in a fit of merriment, from which

he could not recover them. Mrs A— is possessed with magnificent ideas about Australia. It takes an hour to get a mere outline of her plans. Captain M— is all for convict management by the mark system; and to hear him, you would think that if he were to get his idea carried out, crime would soon be banished from the earth. Captain M— [a different man from the foregoing] has a great geographical scheme. Maps are to be made and books written giving the name of every place in the world, even sand-banks at sea, estimated to be three hundred thousand in number; the maps to be managed by having figures of reference instead of names, which, he justly remarks, sometimes extend over twenty degrees of longitude. Captain K— is full of new modes of land-tenure in Ireland. Bring these modes into operation, and everything is to go on beautifully. Mr C— is all for sanitary regulations, and can give exact estimates as to what, in certain circumstances of aerial purification, would be the annual saving of soap to the metropolis. T—, denunciatory of horse-racing. B—, crazy about temperance. Never loses a chance of pressing upon you the value of cold water. Takes two tumblers regularly before breakfast. [Since the above was written, in 1845, what immense additions to the realms of Boredom by 'Spiritualism,' 'Evolution,' 'Women's Rights,' 'Permissive Bills,' and other speculative topics!]

A FORTUNE MADE BY A WAISTCOAT.—Some people have a fancy for fine waistcoats. This taste was more common in my young days than it is now. Stirring public events were apt to be celebrated by patterns on waistcoats to meet the popular fancy. I remember that the capture of Mauritius, at the close of 1810, was followed by the fashion of wearing waistcoats speckled over with small figures shaped like that island, and called Isle of France waistcoats. It was a galling thing for the French prisoners of war on parole to be confronted with these demonstrations. At court, highly ornamented waistcoats have been the fashion for generations. George, Prince of Wales, while Regent, was noted for his affection for this rich variety of waistcoats, and thereby hangs a tale. His Royal Highness had an immense desire for a waistcoat of a particular kind, for which he could discover only a piece of stuff insufficient in dimensions. It was a French material, and could not be matched in England. The war was raging, and to procure the requisite quantity of stuff from Paris was declared to be impracticable. At this juncture one of the Prince's attendants interposed. He said he knew a Frenchman, M. Bazalgette, carrying on business in one of the obscure streets of London, who, he was certain, would undertake to proceed to Paris and bring away what was wanted. This obliging tailor was forthwith commissioned to do his best to procure the requisite material. Finding that a chance had occurred for distinguishing himself and laying the foundation of his fortune, the Frenchman resolved to make the attempt. It was a hazardous affair, for there was no regular communication with the coast of France, unless for letters under a cartel. Yet, Bazalgette was not daunted. If he could only land safely in a boat, all would be right. This, with some difficulty and manœuvring, he effected. As a pretended refugee back to his own country, he was allowed to land

and proceed to Paris. Joyfully he was able to procure the quantity of material required for the Prince Regent's waistcoat; and not less joyfully did he manage to return to London with the precious piece of stuff wrapped round his person. The waistcoat was made, and so was the tailor's fortune and that of his family.

FATE OF MODEST MEN.—The world generally takes men at their own apparent estimate of themselves. Hence, modest men never attain the same consideration which bustling, forward men do. It has not time or patience to inquire rigidly, and it is partly imposed upon and carried away by the man who vigorously claims its regards. The world, also, never has two leading ideas about any man. There is always a remarkable unity in its conceptions of the characters of individuals. If an historical person has been cruel in a single degree, he is set down as cruel and nothing else, although he may have had many good qualities, all not equally conspicuous. If a literary man is industrious in a remarkable degree, the world speaks of him as only industrious, though he may be also very ingenious.

FATE OF A PROHIBITORY LAW.

THE success of laws in the United States to prohibit the sale of spirituous liquors has frequently been questioned. Some allege that the laws have worked so well as to offer an example for copying in this country; others as strenuously affirm that they have been altogether a failure. Our own recollections of what we saw in several quarters in the northern states rather tend in this latter direction. Shebeening, or illicit dealing in liquors, seemed far from uncommon; so that the law only drove dram-drinking from public to private resorts. Any controversy on the subject may now be said to be settled by what is reported by an American correspondent in the *Times*, January 15, 1874. He specially refers to the Massachusetts Prohibitory Law. He states that Mr Martin Griffin, one of the State Police Commission, has resigned office from a conscientious conviction that the law is abortive, cannot be properly put in execution, and, 'as it stands on the statute-books, is detrimental to the cause of temperance, and that it leads to corruption and inefficiency. A great portion of the time of the commission, he adds, is spent in the investigation of charges of malfeasance against the constables whose duty it is to enforce the law, and he believes firmly that a good license law is the best means of arriving at the result desired by temperance people. In practice the sale of spirituous liquors is almost unrestrained, while the business of the brewers chiefly suffers from the enforcement of the law. Malt liquors being in bulky packages and incapable of clandestine transportation and concealment, are easily seized, while the others are allowed comparatively free movement and sale; and being the ones chiefly obtainable, this accounts for the surprising amount of drunkenness visible in Boston and the other large towns. In defence of the law, General Bates, the chairman of the Police Commission, has written a letter, in which he vigorously argues in favour of the Board, and says they are unable to cope with the violators of the law, because they have not power enough. The leading journal of New England, the *Boston Advertiser*, in discussing this

question, says that the prohibitory law and the agencies appointed for its enforcement have in the cities wholly failed in their work; and that, after nearly twenty years' experience of a prohibitory law, and seven or eight years' trial of a state police specially appointed to enforce it, there are at this time in Boston three thousand places where liquors are illegally sold. There are sixteen constables in the city to close these places; and what, it asks, can sixteen men do with such an army of offenders, each one of whom has his own *clientèle* ready to sustain him and set him up in business if any accident befall him? The public and open violation of the law increases every year, and the constables cannot enforce it impartially and justly if they would. If their force were increased tenfold, they still would be unable to enforce it, for the difficulties are quite beyond their control. The *Boston Advertiser* says the law is an anomaly; that the sentiment of the community does not support it; that its daily and hourly violation has taken from it every atom of living force; and that while no complaint or appeal from those who have suffered by this uncontrolled traffic can overstate its injuries and need of restraint, there ought to be provided laws which have some basis in reason and in the sympathies of the communities where they are to be enforced. There is to be a strong effort made at the approaching session of the Massachusetts legislature to procure a change in the prohibitory system.' The foregoing statements are worth the consideration of those who contend for instituting arrangements contrary to public feeling, or which cannot well be enforced by ordinary agencies.

LOVE.

Love is not made of kisses, or of sighs,
Of clinging hands, or of the sorceries
And subtle witchcrafts of alluring eyes.

Love is not made of broken whispers; no!
Nor of the blushing cheek, whose answering glow
Tells that the ear has heard the accents low.

Love is not made of tears, nor yet of smiles;
Of quivering lips, or of enticing wiles:
Love is not tempted; he himself beguiles.

This is Love's language, but this is not Love.

If we know aught of Love, how shall we dare
To say that this is Love, when well aware
That these are common things, and Love is rare?

As separate streams may, blending, ever roll
In course united, so, of soul to soul,
Love is the union into one sweet whole.

As molten metals mingle; as a chord
Swells sweet in harmony; when Love is lord,
Two hearts are one, as letters form a word.

One heart, one mind, one soul, and one desire,
A kindred fancy, and a sister fire
Of thought and passion; these can Love inspire.

This makes a heaven of earth; for this is Love.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 389 High Street, EDINBURGH.
Also sold by all Booksellers.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 530.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1874.

Price 1½d.

THE STREET NEWS-BOYS OF LONDON.

THE penny papers brought into existence the industry of the street sale of news. Prior to their establishment, there were no news-boys of the present sort. So recently as 1851, Mr Henry Mayhew tells us that 'the yearly expenditure in the streets on second editions amounts to one hundred and fifty pounds,' and that there are only twenty street sellers of newspapers, each of whom is so employed for an average period of six weeks only out of the year. At the present time, it would be difficult, indeed, to gather any notion either of the number of street news-sellers, or of the amount thus expended by the public; all we can be quite sure of is, that the latter may now be counted by thousands of pounds.

The street news-boys choose their calling chiefly because they have been brought up to no trade, and but little capital is needed in it. They are drawn from more respectable classes than may generally be supposed; many of the little boys belonging to families in which it is deemed the duty of every member, however young, to earn something; the remainder being very generally orphans of artisans, who are compelled to choose between this work and destitution. They are, as a rule, neither beggars nor boys who have seen the inside of a refuge, much less of a prison. Their ages range from ten to eighteen; but there are a few children under seven, and here and there a man of seventy. All have homes, or are at least settled; it is not a matter of chance where the news-boy will sleep when the day's work is over, nor does he sleep here to-day and there to-morrow. A penny saveloy and a penny roll are a fair dinner for him; moreover, eating them does not interfere with his business. Clothing is rather an expensive item; for, however poor it may be, it is obvious it must be maintained, and its wear and tear is unusually great. However, in this matter the boy is, as a rule, helped by gifts, often made by people nearly as poor as himself. Accidents from vehicles are, strange to say, extremely rare; but illness sends him either to the workhouse or

the hospital, and, of course, no such thing as a 'sick club' exists.

One of the worst features of his calling is that it leads to nothing better. It is true that here and there, as the little boy becomes a young man, he drops out of the ranks. In such cases, chance has presented to him a new field of labour, generally in the service of another person; or, frequently indeed, exposure to all weathers, without adequate clothing and food, has killed him.

To say nothing of the boy who only occasionally spends an hour or two in the streets to profit by some special occurrence, newspaper boys are of three classes. There is the little 'helper' boy, employed at from fourpence to sixpence a day by some more prosperous and bigger boy; there is the ordinary news-boy; there is, at the top of the tree, the news-boy who, besides selling on his own account, acts as agent between several newspaper publishers on the one hand and a certain number of the ordinary news-boys on the other. The aim of all is to get into this class, which, as will presently be seen, is not easily reached by any. The newspaper proprietors do not maintain any staff of boys for street sale; each of the proprietors who keeps carts for delivering papers to shopkeepers in the suburbs employs eight or ten or a dozen boys to assist the delivery, the carts taking the boys some distance from town, and dropping them and their 'quires' in the different districts to be supplied. These are the lads whom we see with *Globe* or *Standard*, &c. worked on their caps.

Stand-points for selling, or 'pitches,' as they are called, are selected on fixed principles, the chief of which is, that the foot-passengers be very numerous and belong to the business classes; accordingly, Pall Mall and St James' Street are nearly as unfrequented by the regular news-boy as are the outlying suburbs. Such places are left to those lads who are found ready to run through them on their way back from the newspaper office to their regular stands, crying the news at the top of their voices. The vagabonds who bawl out all sorts of sensational lies do not belong in any way to the class of news-boys. But there is another principle in the

selection of 'a pitch' that does infinite credit to the street-boy: he will not interfere with a present occupant of the ground. As the 'pitches' where morning papers command a sale are few, this rule involves a good deal of self-sacrifice, and, in consequence, the great majority of the news-boys have no opportunity of beginning work till the afternoon brings out the evening papers. There is an old man, for instance, say at the *Swiss Goat's Horns*, who sells papers to the 'bus passengers in the morning, but he never has a sufficient number; no boy would, however, be found to come and compete with him. 'The old man don't venture out enough, I know, but he would think it very bad of me, sir,' is the general answer. Remembering what are the horrors of hunger and want, there is a heroism in this that is not always found in some classes ranking far higher in the social scale.

The least amount of capital required for a fair start is ninepence. With this a boy can buy a quire of the *Echo*, twenty-six sheets, upon the sale of which he clears fourpence; then he can get another quire, and so on. There is no credit given for a boy to trade upon, except in the case of the boy who has risen to the first class. He gets as many papers as he chooses from the different newspaper offices, and he does not pay for them till late the same night. He looks, in the first instance, at the placard, and upon its degree of attractiveness he forms his own judgment as to the probable number of copies he will want for himself and for the dozen or so of ordinary news-boys who stand around his 'pitch,' and whom he supplies. He sells to these boys at the same price he has himself bought; but when the publisher's collector calls upon him at the 'pitch' at nine o'clock at night, to receive from him the money for the afternoon supply, one copy in every quire is allowed to the agent-boy for his services. He takes on an average two or three quires of the third edition, and four or five quires of the fourth edition of an evening paper. A boy of this stamp must necessarily be trustworthy, and he must have managed to make this plain before he could secure the confidence of the publishers.

The trade price of the *Globe* and *Standard* is one shilling and sixpence, and the *Echo* ninepence for a quire of twenty-six sheets, the *Pall Mall Gazette*, three shillings for a quire of twenty-seven sheets; but the last is often bought only by the nine copies for one shilling. The *Echo* only allows one paper to be returned (as unsold and unsaleable) to each twenty-six papers purchased; the *Standard* allows four; the *Pall Mall Gazette*, three to the quire of twenty-seven; but the *Globe* will allow for whatever copies may remain on hand. It is understood that these regulations, both as to 'returns' and the arbitrary number allotted to the 'quire,' were, until lately, rather more favourable to the news-boy. It is only the agent-boy, however, who can take advantage of 'returns.' When he sells to the ordinary boy, the transaction is final.

If, as is generally the case, the news-boy does not attempt the sale of morning papers, his work begins about two P. M., and ends about eight, and the whole morning is wasted and profitless. The earnings of a boy on an average day are about two shillings; the first-class boy earns perhaps nearly three shillings. In winter, the earnings are sensibly

lower. However, the week preceding Christmas day is one of exceptional gain, for *Punch's Almanac* has a large street sale, and the profit upon that publication is a consideration to the news-boy; a quire of twenty-six copies costs him four shillings and threepence, and it realises six shillings and sixpence, or twenty-seven pence profit for every twenty-six copies, but no unsold copies can be returned. An exceptional day comes every now and again, too, when profits are even doubled. Railway accidents yield by far the richest harvest to the street newspaper-seller. Of course, such a thing as the Great Coram Street murder makes a little difference; whilst the Tichborne case has for months materially augmented sales, more especially if any collision between judges and counsel is announced.

The street-boy has his luck, too, sometimes in other directions. A gentleman well known to the writer gave a boy, some years ago, half-a-crown instead of a penny. The boy returned it a minute afterwards. The gentleman, who happened to be a partner in a large mercantile establishment, gave him a situation in the firm, and that boy now occupies a leading and well-paid position among its employés. In another case, a gentleman became prepossessed in favour of a lad selling papers in Oxford Street, at the corner of the Edgeware Road, and procured him an appointment as a subordinate clerk in the Post-office, where he still serves. And in a smaller degree, lucky is the 'boy' (twenty-three years of age, and married!), who furnished some of the particulars embodied in the present article, and who has been placed in a respectable situation in a public company, owing to the writer thus happening to become acquainted with him: his conduct has been most satisfactory.

The *Globe* and *Echo* would appear to have the largest street-sale; but on the days when the Tichborne case is reported, the sale of the *Standard* is the largest of all. At least one evening paper, by the way, it may fairly be noticed, publishes its first issue as the 'second edition.' Street-business in comic papers is comparatively limited; and there is no street-sale at all of the three-penny morning papers. *Punch* is now to be had here and there of street-sellers, who no doubt were never asked for that three-penny paper until it was seen they had it for sale. How is it, there are no little girls selling papers? Perhaps it is quite as well there are not, but one wonders why not. Outside the *Echo* office is a girl of twenty, who to some extent does duty between the publisher and these trade customers, receiving in return one sheet for every quire she sells; this is generally about sixty quires a day; so, if she can afterwards sell her sixty copies to the public, she realises two shillings and sixpence for the day's work, or one and ninepence if she sells them wholesale to the boys.

The contrast with the newsman of fifty years ago is curious. Those were the days when newspapers were few and high-priced, when no newspaper was permitted to be printed on any sheet that had not the red penny stamp, when, in addition, too, every advertisement paid a duty of one shilling and sixpence to the state. The newsman of that period was up at four o'clock in the morning to procure a few of the first morning papers, allotted to him at extra charges, for despatch by the 'early coaches.' Then he took his turn for

the regular supply, when he ran round the town leaving a paper at each of his customers' houses. Besides this, every newsman had a large class of readers at so much per paper per hour. Comparing the present with the past, it cannot be denied that the metropolis has gained by the change; the increased supply of contemporaneous history arises entirely out of the demand for it—the demand, in other words, for the culture of intelligence.

When, in future, a poor little boy, with two or three copies of the *Echo* under his arm, pursues us with his importunities, late at night, long after our own little ones are snug in bed, perhaps, too, in weather cruelly hard upon the ill-clad, it will occur to us that maybe even this ragged urchin is, or once was, 'somebody's darling,' and we shall look on him less harshly. We shall know that if he fail in selling these last copies of his quire, all his two or three hours of previous hard work is thrown away—his 'left-over' copies are a dead loss on his hands. To buy an *Echo* of him, then, is no longer to give him his twenty-sixth part of fourpence; it is to give him the whole price of the paper; it is all profit to him. It is to encourage hard, very hard work.

Let any one observe the news-boys of London, and he will find the same faces on the same spots at the same time, day by day, and all days, weather fair or weather foul; scantily dressed, scantily fed, but, by their very regularity alone, affording a fair guarantee of real respectability. One thing is certainly remarkable concerning the London newspaper boys. This is their extreme alacrity. In comparison with boys at provincial railway stations, how sharp are they in calling out the names of the papers they have to dispose of, and civilly urging sales! In these humble efforts we have a vivid type of the commercial character of England.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER V.—THE WILL.

ROSEBANK, the residence of the late Matthew Thurle, steel-plate manufacturer, was a picturesque cottage, situated so much at the extremity of the suburbs of Hilton as to be called without flattery a country-house. It had a large garden, full of the sweet-scented flowers from which the place derived its name; and the cultivation of them had been its owner's hobby. He had spent money on little else, for his tastes had been simple, as is usually the case with those who have made their own way in the world. Time was, and not so long ago, when Matthew Thurle had been in but a small way of business, and had had to borrow the money requisite for certain improvements in the machinery of his trade, which had subsequently yielded him a golden harvest; and the man who had lent it to him was Herbert Thorne. They had been friends from boyhood, and their pursuits in manhood had been similar, though not identical. They were equally diligent, equally sober, equally sagacious, but the wits of the one had taken a practical turn, and those of the other a theoretical. It was no wonder, therefore, that the former thrived in the world; and the latter found himself, at fifty years

of age, a considerably less prosperous man than when he had started in life. Thurle had repaid his debt, with the legal interest, and would have repaid the obligation also, if Thorne had suggested to him any mode of doing so. With respect to this matter, mankind are divided into three classes: the first, and most numerous, are neither ready nor willing to shew their sense of past favours; the second are willing, but not ready without pressure; and the third—so small, as to be hardly called a class—are both ready, and willing. Thurle belonged to the second class. He might, in his turn, have advanced money to his former creditor to procure certain patents—one, especially, for the preparation of a peculiar ink which its inventor had entitled 'terminable,' and that promised to repay him for years of thought and toil; but not having been applied to for the advance, he had shut his eyes to his friend's obvious need of it, and turned the money over and over again in his own business. It was pleasant to him to see it grow and grow there; and for the sake of that pleasure, he denied himself almost every other, including that of benefiting his old school-fellow and companion. His household at Rosebank was decreased, in inverse proportion to his means, until it consisted of but a single indoor servant, though no less than three gardeners were employed in the propagation of his roses. He entertained his friends so rarely and so sparsely, that they gradually dropped away from him, till he became that most pitiable of spectacles, an old man without a friend. He had two nephews, it was true, of whom the younger, John Milbank, was a man in some respects after his own heart—diligent, studious, averse to dissipation of all kinds, and who shewed a remarkable aptitude for the business in which he had embarked his own darling gold; yet, curiously enough, he could never, as he himself expressed it, 'take to' John. His affection had centred upon Richard, the ne'er-do-well, the profligate, and it had clung to him despite many a rude shock.

There were reasons for this, beside the liking for him, which needs no reason, and which weighs with most of us, in such cases—though it was strange it should so weigh with *him*—more heavily than all the virtues in the opposite scale. In the first place, Richard was, or had been, made in a great measure independent of him by his father's will; whereas John had little beyond his salary as his uncle's assistant: this possession of comparative wealth gave the former an importance in the gold-dazzled eyes of old Matthew, and he would gladly have enriched the nephew who did not (as he imagined) need his riches, although he had not deserved them, at the expense of his diligent brother; but that he felt that in Richard's hands the business which he had created and toiled for, for so many years, and which he loved like a sentient creature, would without doubt go to ruin. In the second place, Richard had pleased the old man by his choice of a sweetheart in

Maggie Thorne. He was not so blinded by mere money as not to recognise money's worth, and he saw in the clever, hard-working girl a valuable helpmate to any man, and to Richard the very guide and safeguard of which his frivolity and imprudence (for it was thus he mildly designated his favourite nephew's vices) made him stand so much in need. What weighed with him also, perhaps, no less was, that he looked upon the match as a discharge in full for the obligation which in time past he had incurred to Maggie's father, and which his conscience secretly reproached him for not having recognised more directly. It is only of late years that the charity bestowed after death—that of 'benevolent founders,' 'munificent testators,' and so forth—has been estimated at its due moral value (expressed arithmetically as nought divided by number one); and perhaps Matthew Thurle may be excused for imagining that he was doing a handsome thing in thus giving away what cost him nothing—namely, his consent to his nephew's union; but he was certainly blameworthy in the selfish complacency with which he regarded the sacrifice of Maggie herself, who was at least as likely to suffer from Richard's proprietorship as the 'business.'

Thus matters had stood when Mr Thurle had been attacked by his last illness; but he had exhibited more severity towards his scapegrace nephew than he had really felt; and under the idea that his name would not appear in his uncle's will, Richard—as it was generally believed and whispered—had committed the outrage of which we have already spoken. At all events, some person had obtained, by force, the old man's signature to some document under the circumstances described, and it was certainly very suspicious that on his partial recovery, Mr Thurle had instituted no steps for the apprehension of the offender. Under the influence of his immediate alarm, he had at first made known the matter; but he had since been very reluctant to speak of it; and the impression of those who knew him best was, that he had come to the conclusion that Richard Milbank—his favourite nephew, and indeed the only man for whom he had ever entertained what could be termed affection—and no other, had been the would-be robber. The circumstance that he had never sent for Richard since, even to bid him farewell, greatly corroborated the public opinion in this respect, and it was concluded by all, save Lawyer Linch and one other, that the elder nephew's name would not appear in the old man's will at all.

Curiosity as to this matter—though it would not thereby be satisfied—brought a good many persons to the funeral of Matthew Thurle; old acquaintances came, with whom, before the disease of getting and saving had settled upon him, he had been on familiar terms; and these, the presence of some young fellows interested in Richard's fortunes, but by no means affected by the melancholy of the occasion, greatly scandalised. But after the ceremony was over, those who were privileged by invitation to repair to Rosebank and hear the last

testament of the deceased were few indeed. They comprised the family lawyer, Mr Linch, a lay preacher in the sect to which Mr Thurle had belonged, and who had opened his eyes very wide indeed at seeing Richard at the cemetery: Richard himself, pale and anxious, but with a devil-may-care air that strangely contrasted with his funereal garb: John, a little more quiet and thoughtful than usual, perhaps, but without any demonstrations of woe—which in his case would certainly have been out of place enough; he had done his uncle's bidding through life without pleasing him, and only now was about to enter into his reward: Mrs Morden, the deaf housekeeper, who had come unasked up to the parlour to 'look after' her own interests, as Mr Linch afterwards jestingly remarked, since it was impossible she could hear what fortune might be in store for her: Herbert Thorne, the steel-plate engraver: and last, but by no means least in the eyes of three of the company, and the cynosure of all of them, his daughter. Why Maggie was there—for she had not been of the assemblage at the cemetery, which had been confined to males—was a question only herself could answer. She had announced her intention of being present, at breakfast that morning, to her father, in her quiet resolute way, and he had made no effort to oppose it. Whatever her motive, he thought it would be good for her to hear what the dead man had to say respecting Richard Milbank, for he expected some plain speaking; and Maggie expected it too, and went to comfort Richard. He thought she had never looked so beautiful as in her mourning clothes, and even whispered as much in her delicate ear. But she looked very grave, and turned her head away, as though the occasion was ill chosen for such compliments. The scene, indeed, was serious and sombre enough, as the lawyer took his seat at the table, with the will in his hand; while the rest, forming a half-circle in front of him, sat all more or less expectant, awaiting its contents. The windows, which opened to the ground, had been set wide, for the afternoon was sultry, and through them came the summer air, heavy and faint with rose odours, bringing with them, to all present, the memory of the dead man.

'He must have had something gentle and tender about him,' reflected Maggie, 'after all, to have been so fond of flowers: surely, he will not carry his severity to poor Richard beyond the tomb.'

These hopeful thoughts were interrupted by Mr Linch's short dry cough, with which he always commenced what he called 'a statement.'

'This is the last will and testament of our late friend, Mr Matthew Thurle,' said he, 'executed in my presence, and duly witnessed, on the sixth of June last—only a few weeks before his decease.'

Discarding its legal phraseology, and rejecting the moral and religious aphorisms with which it was curiously interspersed, so that it resembled less a will than a sermon, the document provided as follows:

First, if 'my nephew, Richard Milbank, shall, from any cause save that of illness, absent himself from my funeral, or attend it without decent mourning apparel, he shall, *ipso facto*, be deprived of any benefits intended for him as hereafter written.'

At this, Maggie cast a bright and rapid glance at her lover, as though she would have said: 'See what would have happened, had I not persuaded

you to behave with due respect !' But, to her surprise, he did not even look towards her : his gaze was fixed upon the floor with a frowning brow ; he was, in fact, consumed with rage and chagrin : with rage, that his uncle should have laid this commandment on him—also because he had obeyed it, as might be imagined, out of fear ; and with chagrin, that he should seem to be indebted to John for his escape from disinheritance. It was true that he had been persuaded by Maggie, before his brother had spoken to him, to attend the funeral, but John could not have known that, and his intentions had therefore been generous and well meant, and clearly laid him under a strong obligation.

'You will allow me to say, Mr Richard,' said the lawyer, looking up at him from his papers, 'as an old friend of your family, and one who has known you from a child, that I am glad to see you here ; not only on your own account, but on that of your deceased uncle, to whom, if he knows what is happening here, I am sure your presence will give pleasure.'

'My deceased uncle will be easily pleased, then,' replied Richard coolly ; 'for, as it happens, I am here out of no respect for his memory whatever, but to please Miss Thorne yonder.'

'Tut, tut, tut,' said Mr Linch : 'this is very sad.'

'Moreover,' continued Richard, with an effort, 'I am bound to say that my brother John gave me a hint that it would be better for my prospects that I should be here to-day, and though it did not affect my resolution, for the reason I have already given, and to which Miss Thorne will testify, I beg to acknowledge his'—he was about to say 'generosity,' but stopped himself, and substituted for it, 'good intentions.'

'This will, to my knowledge, has never been out of my hands,' remarked Mr Linch, turning sharply on John Milbank.

'My uncle informed me of its first provision,' observed John quietly, 'and in such a manner that I was led to the conclusion that he wished my brother to be informed of it.'

'It was a very generous and brotherly act,' exclaimed Mr Linch, with unwonted enthusiasm.

'Had you not better proceed with the will,' remarked Richard sullenly, 'and preach your sermon afterwards to those who may remain to hear it ?'

Mr Linch bit his lip, and the colour came into his cheeks ; the lay preacher was much given to hold discourses both in season and out of it, but the lawyer was well aware that he had exceeded his professional duties on the present occasion. Without rejoinder or further comment, therefore, he proceeded to read the provisions of the will.

The whole of the dead man's wealth, almost all of which was invested in the factory, was devised to his two nephews on the following conditions : they were to be partners in the business, which was not to be disposed of ; and they were to live together at Rosebank, at least for the ensuing twelve months. The reasons for this curious proviso were also given. 'By working side by side with John, and especially by living under the same roof with him, I look to see Richard become another man through his brother's example. I lay this injunction also upon my elder nephew for my old friend Herbert Thorne's sake—that he does not marry Maggie Thorne for a twelvemonth

from this date. In that time, having money at his disposal, and being his own master, it will be seen whether Richard is fit to be trusted with Maggie's fate. If he marries her earlier, he thereby forfeits all that I have above bequeathed to him, which thereupon will fall to his brother absolutely. And whosoever shall leave Rosebank during the above period, and live elsewhere, apart from his brother, shall similarly lose what I have left to him, which shall then revert to the other.'

There were many such stringent regulations and enactments, but all aimed more or less to draw the brothers together, with the express intention of benefiting the elder ; at the same time that the very precautions implied that he was a reprobate and a good-for-nothing.

Of all the evil that lives after men, there is nothing so harmful as an unjust will ; it parts those who are joined in bonds of friendship and even of love itself : it widens the fissure where they are already parted ; and it lays the foundations of jealousy and hate for generations to come. In the present case, two men, who had not an idea in common, and whose natures were antagonistic in the extreme, were condemned by this dead man's ukase to dwell together for a year of their lives, and to share a common fortune for ever. It was felt by all who heard his mandates that Matthew Thurle had left mischief behind him ; and even the lawyer, looking from Richard's flushed and angry face to John's, so quiet and so pale, did not venture to address to either of the two co-heirs his customary phrase on such occasions : 'I congratulate you.'

The first person to speak was the deaf house-keeper.

'Has my master remembered his old servant, Mr Linch ?' inquired she, in a quavering voice. 'I did not hear my name !'

The lawyer hesitated. It was a hard case, he knew, that this faithful creature, who had borne with old Thurle's temper for more than a quarter of a century, and had helped him in his darling scheme for saving money, to her own discomfort, had not been mentioned in his last testament.

'You are to have fifty pounds a year for life,' said John Milbank, pitching his voice, as long habit had accustomed him to do, so as to reach the old woman's ear.

'God bless him !' answered she, with a sigh of relief, the picture of the parish workhouse probably becoming a dissolving view to her mental eyes. 'I thought he would not forget me ; and I hope he has not cut off Master Richard.'

This was hard on John, though he was accustomed to find his brother preferred before him by the entire female sex—as an object of pity, it is true, but also of admiration ; but on this occasion at least he had his compensation. The company had now risen ; and Maggie advanced towards him with outstretched hand, and said : 'I must thank you, John, upon my own account, for your generosity to Richard in urging him to be here to-day.'

His face flushed to the temples, and his hand shook as he took hers ; but his voice was firm and quiet, as usual, as he replied : 'I only did my duty, Maggie, in carrying out my uncle's wishes.'

There was a certain firmness, which his enemies called priggism, in all John said, even at his best.

Richard broke into a contemptuous laugh.

'Well, I think we have had enough of duty and our uncle to-day,' observed he scornfully.—'Mrs Morden, this old curmudgeon has not left you a single farthing,' added he vehemently. 'The annuity John spoke of will be paid you by him and me, so don't let us hear any more about your dear old master!'

'Yes, yes; God bless him!' answered the old lady, to whom only the last few words of Richard's speech were intelligible. 'How he would have enjoyed the smell of them roses to-day! Wouldn't he? But that's all over now.'

Perhaps Richard would have made another attempt to deceive her, had not Maggie interfered.

'If it pleases her to think her old master kinder than he was, why disturb her happy faith?' said she.

'Yes, yes; let her think what she likes,' added John persuasively.

Richard shrugged his shoulders. 'Since you wish it, Maggie, let it be so,' said he; 'but for my part,' added he with significance, 'I hate humbug and hypocrisy of all description.'

There was an unpleasant pause, broken at last by a suggestion from the lawyer, that Mrs Morden should give up her keys to her young masters, that they might go over the house, and explore their new possession. Whereupon, the little company, after a somewhat constrained farewell, took their departure, leaving the two young men alone at Rosebank.

CHAPTER VI.—THE CO-HEIRS.

'Well,' said Richard, when the housekeeper, not without tears in her old eyes, had produced the keys, and withdrawn to her own apartment, 'you know the cottage well enough, I suppose; and as for me, though by no means so familiar with it, I have no curiosity about its contents, except in one respect—I should like to know what Uncle Matthew has left in his cellar.'

'Just as you please,' answered John quietly. 'There is an inventory of everything else except the wine.'

'That is just like the old hunks: he took infinite pains about everything that a man of spirit despises; while all that makes life pleasant he deemed of no account.'

John looked as if about to speak, but did not do so.

'What on earth are you at?' inquired the other impatiently.

'I am lighting a candle; the cellar is not lit from outside, you know.'

'Bah! How those matches smell of brimstone! They remind me of where the old miser is gone himself! I should think he gave about a farthing a box for them. I'll just smoke a cigar, to make the room sweet. Just hand me that spill.—Thank you. Faith! if he saw me now, smoking in his best parlour, it would give him another turn of the screw.'

With his hand thrust deep into his pockets, and smoking his cigar, Richard followed his brother as he led the way with the candle.

'You had better be careful how you come down these steps,' said John, when he had unlocked the cellar door, 'for they are very steep.'

'You are a fool to say so,' laughed the other

coarsely, 'since nothing could turn out better for you than that I should pitch down here head first, and break my neck. The place as it is looks uncommonly like a grave.'

There were two cellars—one contained in the house itself, and the other built out underground: the walls of both were damp and mildewy; and on the bottles, particularly those in the outer compartment, the cobwebs were hanging in clusters. There was altogether an ample store of wine.

'Well, I call this a prize!' cried Richard, looking about him. 'I will never again find fault with temperance and sobriety. The old fool must have become a teetotaler in his old age, surely.—I beg your pardon, though; I forgot that you had taken the pledge yourself; but you'll break it now; won't you? There's some '20 port here, if the seal tells true: I should think Father Mathew himself would absolve you for drinking that.'

'My uncle drank very little of late years,' remarked John coldly, without taking notice of the other's personal allusion; 'and what he did drink was only the lighter sorts.'

'The cheaper sorts, you mean, my good sir. Well, it was very wise of him, because they don't keep their body. At the same time, if he could have foreseen what was going to happen, he would probably have treated himself to something better. There's very little champagne, I see; we must look to that. But old Roberts will smack his lips over that port.—You know Roberts, of course, the banker that was.'

'I know who he is,' answered John quietly.

'Ah, but you shall know him—he's a man whose talk is worth hearing. There's Gresham too, as sharp as a needle. And if it comes to singing songs, I don't know a man in England that I would back against Dennis Blake. There are merry days, my good fellow, in store for you at Rosebank, I promise you, and many a jolly bout will we have in this old parlour.'

They had left the cellar now, and were once more in the sitting-room; the weather had changed; the rain was falling heavily without, and all the sky was overcast and gloomy.

'You will ask whom you please to Rosebank, of course, Richard,' observed his brother, 'but I hope, while I am here, you will not invite Dennis Blake.'

'Not ask Denny! Why not? He is the very prince of good fellows, and my most particular friend.'

'I am sorry to hear it. That is,' added John, correcting himself, 'since he is your friend, I will say nothing against him; but personally, he is very objectionable to me—I may even say offensive.'

'That is because you don't understand him, my dear sir. You must know Denny intimately to appreciate him. The fact is you have been consorting with little better than Quakers. I say nothing against them, because they are your friends. But now, there is no more necessity for such asceticism; you have been wearing a hair shirt, but you may now indulge yourself with linen. You have not lost the capacity for enjoying yourself, I hope, through your long course of self-denial.'

'There has been no self-denial in my course of life, Richard,' answered the other quietly. 'I have lived, so far as my habits go, as pleased myself.'

'And one other,' returned Richard quickly. 'Come, don't keep on at the old game, when there is no pool left to play for—when you have won the stakes. We are quite *alone*, you know, my good fellow, you and I.'

Richard's air and tone were even more contemptuous than his words, yet a small red spot in the centre of his brother's cheeks was all the fire they kindled.

'I know we are alone, Richard,' answered he, 'and it is very wretched. Still, it is not my fault that it is so, but the misfortune of us both. Since it has pleased our uncle'—

Here Richard burst in with so vehement an execration that the other waited as though it had been a clap of thunder, for it to pass away, ere he resumed:

'Since he has ordained that we should pass the next twelve months in each other's company, why not endeavour to make the best of it? Why make me feel, in your every word and look, that my society is abhorrent to you?'

'Because I can't help it,' was the coarse response. 'It is all very well for you, who are a saint, and can keep all your passions so dutifully under control, that those who don't know you as I do suppose you have none.'

Here the little red spot grew larger, and for a moment John Milbank looked towards his brother as Cain might have regarded Abel.

'You are very hard, Richard,' said he; 'you do not spare me.'

'No, by Heaven! And I don't intend to do so. I mean to make this house unpleasant for you in every way; I tell you that. That is, if you refuse to listen to reason.'

'To reason!' repeated John, in a tone the hopelessness of which made it unwittingly more contemptuous than any sneer.

'O yes, I can be reasonable enough when it suits me,' continued Richard, 'though it mayn't be your sort of reason. One may know on which side one's bread is buttered, quite as well as another, though one may not sacrifice every pleasure in life to the acquisition of a round of it. You have got your round, but I'll take precious good care you don't enjoy it. You think it's a fine thing to be left share and share alike with me at Rosebank; but I can tell you that I am going to be master here, for all that. I'll have my friends here—Denny amongst them—every day in the week. We'll drink—Hollo! what's that I read in your eye? This prospect seems to give you pleasure. "Give this fellow rope enough," you are saying to yourself, "and he will hang himself." You think old Herbert Thorne will object to such goings-on; and that, before the year is out, Maggie may cry off with me, and on with somebody else. Ah, ha! I have found you out, sly fox.'

'Richard,' cried John suddenly, 'when you win at cards, is it not thought a cruel thing to taunt and crow over the loser? You have at least the morality of the card-table, and to that I make appeal. You are the winner, and I am the loser in—another matter. Is not that enough? Can you not be silent over your victory?'

'That depends, my fine fellow. The sight of you, I confess, has not a conciliatory effect upon me. We are like two dogs, you see, whom the keeper has coupled together: one a staid, slow-going

hound; the other, a rover; and the rover is the stronger one, and is likely to drag the other whither he will, or choke him. What we both want is to slip our collars; and it lies with you to do it.'

'If you mean that it depends on me to alter my uncle's will, Richard, you are mistaken. You heard its terms yourself.'

'Its terms! As if I—or you, for the matter of that—cared a farthing about its terms! You will be talking to me next, like Lawyer Linch, about "the wishes of the testator." Is the habit of hypocrisy so easily lost, that it is necessary to be always keeping your hand in?'

'I was merely referring to the facts of the case.'

'And so am I. The facts of the case are, that Uncle Matthew wishes me to attend to the factory business; and I don't mean to go near the place. He wishes me to imitate the example of your virtues, and to be edified by your conversation; whereas, I despise the one, and shall not listen to the other. You will do all the work, and like it. The companion that I shall choose for myself is not you, but Dennis Blake, or some such another—certainly not a serious testototaler like yourself. This will happen, my good sir, whether you will assent to it or not; but if you choose to be reasonable, things may be made very pleasant for both of us.'

'I will make them as pleasant as I can, Richard.'

'That is well said. Now, you are beginning to talk sense. What we are both endeavouring after is a divorce, you see, without the Queen's proctor intervening. There must be no collusion that anybody can lay hold of; and at the same time we must get free. You shall have the business to yourself—without my even so much as looking into an account—and I will take, not half, but so much of the profits as you consider fair, since I shall be only a sleeping-partner.'

'You shall have half, Richard.'

'Well, to be sure, I want money more than you do; and it ought to be considered that my uncle would have made me his heir, but for my own doings. Then one or other of us must leave Rosebank.'

'I would wish that as much as you, Richard; but it is impossible. If I left you here, I should be forfeiting every shilling of my uncle's bequest.'

'Then, I'll go. The money will then, it is true, revert to you by law; but you are a man of honour, and I'll trust you. Give me your word that it shall make no difference'—

'I would not trust myself to do such a thing, Richard,' interrupted the other hastily. 'I thank you for your confidence, but the temptation might be too powerful for me. I would not risk it.'

'Then give me your bond. I'll find a better lawyer than Linch, who will make me safe enough. Just imagine what a twelvemonth lies before us and how we shall detest one another before it's over!'

'That is true,' murmured the other, with a shudder.

'Just so. Then why should you hesitate? We shall both be free, and each pursue that road in life which happens to be most attractive to us. You will extend the business—I will never ask for a farthing more than half the present profits of it—and become a merchant-prince in time, no doubt.

You will have your little tea-fights and prayer-meetings here at Rosebank, and enjoy them, I hope, to your heart's content.

'And you?'

'Oh, I shall also become thoroughly domesticated, though not, perhaps, quite so much in the tame-cat line. I shall marry Maggie—privately, of course—at once, and live happily ever afterwards. After years of separation, you may feel a tenderness for your only brother; and when you die, may bequeath ten thousand pounds apiece to each of your nephews and nieces. Who knows? Come; is it a bargain?'

'No, Richard,' answered the other positively; 'it is impossible!'

'Yet you thought it not impossible a minute ago; I'll swear to it. Shall I tell you what caused you to alter your opinion? Your objection is only to the last part of the arrangement—that I should marry at once. It is extraordinary, considering your secretive habits, that you have no command over your countenance. I can read you like a book—of course full of moralities. Don't be a fool, John. If you think that Maggie will not wait a year for me, you are vastly mistaken. It was only yesterday that she undertook to marry me out of hand, and go to America, in case things had turned out worse to-day for me than they have. As it is, they will have turned out bad for you, if you are obstinate. I ask you once more—are we to wear this galling chain or not?'

'And I tell you once more, I have no power to break it, Richard.'

'That is to say, you have no wish. Very good. The matter henceforth is dropped; and whatever happens, you have only yourself to blame for it.—And now, may I ask you, my good sir, in the character of partner, how I am to get some ready-money, of which I stand much in need? I suppose my cheques upon the firm will be honoured?'

'In time, and within the limits specified by Uncle Matthew's will, no doubt they will; but, as Mr Lynch will tell you—'

'Bother Mr Lynch! I can't wait while the accounts are being looked into, if you mean that. My uncle left some money in the bank, did he not?'

'Yes, eight hundred pounds was the exact sum, as you perhaps remember.'

Richard's handsome face grew very dark, for he could not affect to misunderstand his brother's allusion. To know that one is guilty of a baseness, is very bitter; to know that another knows it, is still worse; but the dregs of the gall are in the draught when that other reveals to you his knowledge. Richard hated John more than he had ever done, for those four words, 'As you perhaps remember.' Not a syllable, however, did he utter in rejoinder.

'I want four hundred pounds,' was all he said. 'Can I have it at once?'

'Not out of our uncle's bequest, as I should suppose, at present. But I have about as much as that of my own, and I will advance it you.'

'Very good. I will give you my I O U.' And he sat down and wrote it accordingly, in return for his brother's cheque. Then crumpling the latter into his pocket, he lit a second cigar, and strode out of the house and into the pouring rain without a word.

His scheme had been to so foreshadow their mutual relations as to disgust his brother, and

compel him to enter into some arrangement to evade the conditions of their uncle's will; but having failed, he bitterly resolved that the picture he had drawn of John's discomfort should be borne out to the uttermost by the reality.

EXPLORATIONS OF A NATURALIST.

MR THOMAS BELT, a young Englishman, skilled as a geologist and a zealous amateur in natural history, proceeded in 1868 to Nicaragua as an employé in connection with a gold-mining concern in that part of Central America. On returning home, he has written a work partly descriptive of the country, but chiefly to tell us about the amazing abundance and variety of animal life which he discovered in his explorations. Some men placed in his onerous position would have taken little heed of anything beyond their professional sphere. He, on the contrary, does not appear to have lost an opportunity of acquiring useful information and extending the boundaries of science—a good example to be followed in the circumstances.

In *The Naturalist in Nicaragua*, as his book is named, little is said of political affairs, and we can just gather that everything in that respect is in as rudimentary and hopeless a condition as is customary in dominions settled and mismanaged by Spaniards. For the country, nature has done much—lavished on it the finest of climates, clothed it in picturesque beauty, and given it a bounteous fertility. Man has done nothing. Indolence and incapacity reign over all. Landing in February at Greytown, on the Atlantic side of the country, Mr Belt found himself on a level shore, with a back-ground of scrub and forest interspersed with lagoons and pools, less malarious than might be expected, in consequence of the blowing of the trade-winds. In a branch of the San Juan river he observed alligators hovering about for a prey. On walking into the swampy forest, the eye is dazzled with the number of parrots, toucans, and tanagers, also no end of beautiful insects, including striped and spotted butterflies, and hairy beetles of different colours. As insectivorous birds abstain from touching hairy caterpillars, nature has covered the beetles with hairs, so that they may be similarly saved from their winged enemies. Concealing their antennæ at their sides, for sake of protection, these beetles are described as imitative caterpillars. In this, we are reminded of different species of insects that are protected by their resemblance to leaves, twigs, and flowers.

In the centre of the country lies the great lake of Nicaragua, extending a hundred and twenty miles in length by a breadth of from fifty to sixty miles. This inland sea, as it may be called, has an outlet eastward by a river, which parts into two branches, one of them the Colorado, the other the San Juan. It was up the latter branch that our author proceeded by a monthly mail-boat to Chontales, the place of his destination. The boat was simply an open canoe, hollowed out of a log of cedar-tree, and had for crew several negroes, who propelled it with their oars. The voyage could not be called very agreeable; for the passengers had to sit in the boat night and day, covered, in the case of rain,

by an umbrella and tarpaulin, but not so easily sheltered from the attacks of mosquitoes. Every morning, there was a short relaxation. The canoe pulled ashore for breakfast, which was prepared by one of the negroes from a store of provisions; the repast being followed by a stroll in the shade of the forest, surrounded by palms, tree-ferns, and other tropical plants. After passing the point where the Colorado branched off, the country became more picturesque, the forests were grander, and the insects more numerous.

Lounging about at the periods of landing, opportunities were offered for studying the marvels of insect life. Two kinds of ants were specially interesting: the Ecitons, or foraging ants, which live wholly on insects or other prey; and the leaf-eating, or vegetable feeding ants. The former of these hunt about everywhere, search every cranny in the bark of trees for cockroaches, spiders, or any other animal they can attack, wrench in pieces, and carry off piecemeal to be devoured. Marching in armies three or four yards wide, they are the terror of grasshoppers and spiders, which in vain seek refuge in the trees. The ants climb up in pursuit; every twig is examined; and dropping in terror from the branches, the poor refugees fall to the ground into the midst of the devouring host. The spiders attempt to save themselves by spinning a fine thread, at the end of which they may suspend themselves in mid-air, swinging between foes above and below. In the armies of these Ecitons, there is a division of labour. Some of the larger size act as officers of companies, and by movements of their antennae direct the line of march; others act as scouts or explorers; and a third class, in the capacity of labourers, dismember the bodies of the victims, and drag them away for food. These, like some other ants, follow their scouts more by scent than by sight. Led on by commanders, their armies are numbered by millions, and it would be difficult to conceive the vigour with which they carry out their expeditions. For intelligence, Mr Belt places them at the head of the Articulata. Their cerebral ganglia are more developed than in other insects. Some instances are given of their ingenuity. On one occasion, a column on the march having come to a small rivulet to be crossed, they contrived by holding one to the other to form a bridge, three ants in breadth, over which they all got in safety. Their discipline in obeying orders is spoken of as remarkable.

At about a hundred and twenty miles from Greytown, the canoe reached San Carlos, situated at the point where the river issues from the lake of Nicaragua. The height of the lake is not more than one hundred and seven feet above the mean sea-level, and as the greatest elevation between the Atlantic and Pacific is only about one hundred and thirty-three feet, it would be possible to construct a water-communication for ships between the two oceans. By taking advantage of the lake midway, a navigable channel with few locks might no doubt be effected. The author before us, however, points out some difficulties. The tendency in the connecting rivers to silt up is a serious objection, and so is the divided nationality of Nicaragua and Costa Rica. In the hands of the Anglo-Americans, these obstructions would disappear. At present, any native enterprise to carry out such an undertaking is altogether hopeless.

Reaching the lake, there was still a voyage of sixty miles, and then ensued a land-journey over hills amidst Indians whose primitive habits resemble those of the ancient Mexicans. Maize grown on the plains is the principal food of the inhabitants, as it has been from the earliest times; the method of preparing cakes of it, called *tortillas*, having undergone no change. The forests resemble nothing of the kind in Europe. From nearly every bough in the great towering trees, hangs a natural network of cables, which, intertwining, send down roots, that are cut by the natives, and form their only cordage. The trees, as well as the ground, exhibit large and beautiful flowers in immense profusion, which there is no winter to diminish. The timber is magnificent.

At a village adjoining the mines to which the author was bent, he settled down in a house with a veranda, not unlike a Swiss chalet. Connected with it was a garden for fruits and vegetables, but these were liable to the ravages of so many insects that the valuable produce came to little. The chief depredators were the leaf-eating ants (*Ecodoma*), which, streaming from the forests, laid bare and ragged every plant suitable to their appetite. For convenience, they came along 'ant-paths,' empty-handed, carrying away, in their return journey, the leaves in their mouths which they had industriously stripped from the rose-trees and cabbages. As any ordinary method of obstructing these depredations would have been useless, Mr Belt fell upon what promised a wholesale riddance. Tracing the ants to a mound full of excavations used as their habitation, he poured in a quantity of carbolic acid mixed with water, which flooding the burrows to the lowest level, produced a wide-spread destruction. Those ants that were not suffocated, rushed out in a state of extreme perplexity. After a consultation with outside marauders, working-parties were organised to carry away food from the stores to a new establishment which was forthwith formed. In performing this duty, the ants had to descend a steep sloping bank. Here, their ingenuity in saving labour was demonstrated. When they came to the top of the bank, they rolled down their burdens, which, on reaching the bottom, were immediately carried off by fresh relays of workers.

In the course of the mining excavations in which the writer was engaged, nests of these ants at a considerable depth were sometimes exposed, and an opportunity given of studying their interior economy. The younger members of the community, he says, are usefully employed in cutting up the leaves into small pieces for storage. Exempted from the heavy labour out of doors, they only ramble about for amusement. Like children who like to jump up behind a carriage, they take the liberty of leaping on the leaves which the elderly ants are dragging along the paths, and so get a ride homewards. The intelligence of these leaf-eating ants does not appear to be much inferior to the Eciton species. Near the gold mines there were tramways, which at first gave no little concern, for troops of marauders were apt to get crushed by the wheels of the cars. Reflecting on this source of danger to life and limb, the ants fell upon the rational device of tunnelling roads below the rails, which, as if by general order, were never afterwards crossed. One scarcely likes to read of a trick which a Spanish Don

played off on a colony of leaf-eating ants. This personage discovered that they could be driven mad by tasting corrosive sublimate. Sprinkling a little of this powder in one of their paths, the ants no sooner touched it than they ran about as if frantic, attacking other ants that came in their way, and tremendous battles ensued. News of the commotion being carried to their nest, ants of a powerful and determined character issued forth, in the capacity of magistrates, to allay the tumult, but they, too, coming in contact with the corrosive sublimate, became as mad as the others, and the conflict went on till the field was strewn with the wounded and dismembered bodies of the combatants.

That these ants actually eat the broken-down leaves with which their nests are stored, seems to be by no means conclusive. Our author offers an explanation which may not, perhaps, be readily accepted by naturalists. He gives it as his belief that the ants make use of the leaves as manure, or mass of decaying matter, 'on which grows a minute species of fungus, on which they feed—that they are in reality mushroom growers, and eaters.' To verify this supposition, he mentions having discovered in the interior of a nest 'a speckled brown, flocculent, spongy-looking mass of a light and loosely connected substance.' The mass, he adds, was 'overgrown and lightly connected together by a minute white fungus, that ramified in every direction through it.' Such, he contends, is the ant-food, which is carefully watched, and carried away in cases of danger to the community. No doubt, any mass of broken leaves would, in the confinement of a cell in a warm climate, soon become putrid, even although the ants, as we are informed, have the skill to construct shafts for ventilation. The rather curious and confidently maintained theory, that these so called leaf-eating ants do not eat leaves at all, but carry them off in order to rear fungi for food on the decaying mass, is worth the consideration of investigators acquainted with this branch of science.

Mr Belt gives some valuable information respecting the geology of the district, and the nature of the lodes, which will be appreciated by those concerned in gold-mining. For all useful details, we refer them to his very interesting work. We might offer the same counsel to all who wish to know the social characteristics of the country. What the narrator says of the sloth and ignorance of even the more affluent classes, is past ordinary credence. Sunk in self-indulgence, they would prefer to submit to any inconvenience rather than put themselves to the smallest industrial exertion. The general ignorance is grotesquely pictured in describing a person of more than ordinary accomplishments, whose house was hospitably opened during a journey across the country. He possessed 'a small library of books, nearly all being missals and prayer-books;' and he had 'a little knowledge of geography,' but as regards England he was sadly deficient. That it 'was a small island, he admitted was new to him, as he thought it was part of the United States, or at least joined to them.' As a climax to his ignorance, he asked 'if it was true that Rome was one of the four quarters of the globe.' Droll, but very melancholy! The ignorance of these Central Americans appears to go far beyond that of the most abject and illiterate of the population in Great Britain.

We have little space for the further explorations of this indefatigable naturalist. His accounts of humming-birds, gems of beauty; of the nests of certain birds hanging from trees; of parrots which construct their dwellings in the ground near the nests of ants, conveniently close to a highly relished variety of food; and of wasps that have strange ways of living, all must be passed over. Ants of one kind or other, we should say, form the staple topic of the volume. They cast up in all quarters. One species of a small size differ very distinctly from all the rest. Instead of making their nests in the ground, and roving about in a predatory fashion, they assume the duty of protecting plants in which they take up their residence. On the plant that specially commands their services there grow hollow thorns, adapted for their abode. There they continually reside, deriving food from a minute kind of fruit of a luscious description suitable for their sustenance. These fruits do not ripen all at once. They come to maturity one after the other, to keep up a proper succession of nutriment; the ants always running about to examine the progress of ripening. In requital for board and lodging, these valiant little warriors, like household troops, defend the plant against all comers, whether mammalia or articulata. Few things are calculated to impress us more strongly with the wonders of animal life in this part of the world, than the description of these tiny warrior ants. To Mr Belt, for what he has related on this and other subjects, all proper thanks must be awarded. We heartily commend his unassuming work to the notice of all who are curious in natural history.

W. C.

THE STORY OF BURTON'S LOAN.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART II.—FINISHED BY ARTHUR DIGBY.

I LEFT Mrs Townshend's cottage, on the evening whose events have been narrated by her daughter, with a troubled mind. I was deeply concerned for Godfrey Burton, who might be hopelessly injured in his career by severe measures on the part of his creditors at this juncture, and bitterly disappointed at my failure to help him. This was my most pressing care. It occurred to me that I might have borrowed the money I had conveyed to her, from Mrs Townshend, for Godfrey's use, but the idea merely flitted through my mind. Alice would need it, thank Heaven, in a few weeks, and he could not possibly repay it so soon; the loan would then be of no service to him. After this cause of trouble, came my displeasure, almost disgust, and a peculiar undefined suspiciousness (which I have learned from experience to dread, so invariably have I been right) of Herbert Townshend. It arose within me irresistibly, it gathered strength from a thousand indescribable sources. I need not here detail my impressions; it is enough that I should in my turn record them.

I had no sooner reached the little inn, where I am well known, than I felt I was in for one of my fits of sleeplessness; and after trying vainly to overcome it, I asked my host to give me the key of the back-door, promising to make all secure when I should return, and went out, to tire myself into sleepiness by walking. I walked for more than two hours, and was returning to my inn, sleepy

enough now, when, as I passed Mrs Townshend's cottage, and was glancing up at Alice's window, my attention was drawn to the fact that the shutters were not closed over those of the drawing-room, and that somebody was moving about that apartment with a light. Knowing the regular habits and early hours of the ladies, I should have knocked at the door, and asked what was the matter, but that Herbert Townshend was there. The moving figure was no doubt his. I stood still, however, and watched the shadow upon the white window-blinds. Hugely distorted as it was, there was no mistaking Herbert, and no difficulty in following his movements. He walked up and down, came to the table, took up some papers, laid them down, walked about again, pulling at his long moustache, and then stood still. A dark, straight shadow interposed itself between the blind and his head and arms; I could see his coat-tails beyond it. What could it be? It wavered to and fro; then it went away—went in, it seemed to me—and I could see Herbert with a gigantically distorted packet in his hand. After a minute, the shadow moved again, and was that of a sitting figure, with its head held between its hands. I walked back to the inn, wondering, and more than ever doubtful about the nature of the business which exacted such laborious attention on the part of an employé as to oblige Herbert to sit up half the night while taking a so-called holiday.

When I saw Alice on the following morning, and heard from her the double intelligence of her brother's departure and the disappearance of the bank-notes which had been placed in the cabinet in my presence on the preceding evening, an instantaneous conviction that the two events were closely connected, took hold of my mind, which reasoned it out with the rapidity of thought in a crisis. Herbert had taken the money; I had seen him take it; the shadow which had come between his head and arms and the blind, was the shadow of the heavy central door of the ebony cabinet; the gigantic roll was the little roll of bank-notes. Why had he done this thing? There was no answer to that question to come for many a day. But there did come a hope, a wild wish to find him, to tell him that the detection which he naturally expected to be delayed until his mother should require the money, or averted, by his being able to restore it secretly to the cabinet, had taken place, and to conceal his crime from his mother. Alice unconsciously gave me a hint on which I immediately thought of acting, with this purpose in view. Perhaps Herbert had taken it in jest, she said. If I could find him, warn him, and persuade him to act upon that suggestion, all might yet be saved. He could hardly have yet disposed of the money; if a small portion only of it were gone, it would be possible for me to replace it. Alice had not yet copied the memorandum I had taken of the numbers of the notes; therefore, no substitution would be observed. I arranged the plan of proceedings which Alice has related, and left the cottage, with the intention of proceeding direct to Paris, whither I felt convinced Herbert had gone; an intention which I carefully concealed from Alice, who would have conjured up a frightful host of dangers. There was something to be risked, no doubt, but the thing could be done, and I meant to do it. On my way to town, I took out the memorandum of the numbers of the

notes, and saw that I had written it on the inside of an envelope bearing an address in Herbert Townshend's hand. It had been torn open, I conclude, in order to add something to the letter inclosed, and thrown on the floor, whence I remembered having picked it up on the previous day. The address was, 'Mr WILLIAM BROWN, 9 Guy Street, Wandsworth Road.' Over the seal was the word *Immediate*. This envelope had contained a letter written only the day before, no doubt when Herbert's mind was full of the difficulty or the temptation that had prompted him to the theft. It was highly probable the letter had had some connection with the circumstance. I would try for information at 9 Guy Street, and, if I did not get any, I should still be in time to get my passport and other papers at my chambers, and catch the mail for Paris that night. I found No. 9 Guy Street a very shabby little house, and was requested to walk up a narrow, carpetless staircase, into a shabby room, which was empty. I heard some whispering close by, and in a few minutes there came in a decent-looking man, with black hair and whiskers, a civil manner, and a harsh foreign accent, who informed me that he was Mr William Brown, and asked my business with him.

'I wish to know whether Mr Herbert Townshend is here?' I replied. 'I have an important family matter to communicate to him.'

'I do not know any person of that name,' was the answer.

'And yet he wrote to you from Dulwich yesterday, Mr Brown.'

'I beg your pardon, sir,' answered the man quite civilly. 'I never heard the name before. I received a letter with the Dulwich post-mark last evening, it is true, but it only contained a post-office order for the amount of a week's rent, in default of a week's notice to quit, from my lodger, Mr Foster, and a few lines asking me to take care of some things for him, until his return.'

I had no excuse for doubting the man, no pretext for asking him to shew me the letter.

'Is Mr Foster a handsome young gentleman with long moustaches,' I asked, 'who has come from Paris, where he lives, within the last few days?'

'Oh, dear, no, sir,' said Mr Brown, smiling, and rubbing his hands, as he saw his way to getting rid of me by an entirely disconcerting answer. 'Mr Foster is a handsome gent, and he has long moustaches; but he don't live in Paris, and he has not been there lately. He has lived in this house going on for five months, as you can see for yourself.' With these words, Mr Brown took a ledger from a table-drawer, and turning over a number of leaves, and running his fore-finger down the columns, shewed me a series of receipted accounts between himself and Mr Thomas Foster. Lost in conjecture, but convinced that Thomas Foster was Herbert Townshend, I asked Mr Brown whether the gentleman in question had any settled occupation, and whether he had many foreign acquaintance and visitors. I added, lest Mr Brown should fancy that the scent of police proceedings lingered around my questions, that I was Mr Townshend's (or Foster's) brother-in-law (a harmless anticipation), and that the gravest family interests depended upon my being able to find him without delay.

'I am very sorry, sir, I cannot give you any information,' said Mr Brown, putting his ledger back into its place as he spoke; 'but I know

nothing whatever about Mr Foster. None of his friends came here; he was generally writing all day, until evening, and then he usually went out, and staid out very late. He may have known foreigners, but I never saw them. I am Marseillais myself, sir, though my name is Brown.

He evidently knew nothing more, or, if he did, there was no use in expecting him to tell, so I left Mr William Brown, exhorting him, in the case of Mr Foster's return, to tell him that his mother at Dulwich earnestly entreated him to go to her without delay; and drove to my chambers in a state of mind impossible to describe. It seemed absolutely certain that Herbert Townshend and Thomas Foster were identical; but then, Thomas Foster had not left Guy Street for five months, during which Herbert Townshend had been in Paris, in the employment of Messrs Lecoq. Here was a mystery which must be cleared up, a threatening mystery, which might involve possibly disgrace, and misery, and ruin. Full of the torture of vague but increasing suspicion, I collected my papers, put a few necessities in a bag, mentally postponed writing to Burton until I should have arrived in Paris, forgetting that there was no direct postal communication, and finally found myself at Cannon Street Station, with a through-ticket to Paris. The train started with three passengers, including myself, all gloomy of aspect.

Even my preoccupation did not entirely overcome the curiosity, interest, perhaps apprehension with which I regarded Paris, then undergoing the miseries of the second siege. All was orderly, quiet, silent, and sad. The troops of the Commune were the principal occupants of the great thoroughfares; the Red flag, generally of the shabbiest dimensions, was visible everywhere, and the sullen roar of the cannon from the forts came heavily to my ears. My papers had been closely scrutinised, but I had not been molested in any way on my arrival, and none of the few people whom I met took any notice of me as I walked through the long silent streets towards the old Rue de l'Arbre Sec, in which Messrs Lecoq's bureaux were situated, No. 90. I came to it in due course, and found a hosier's shop, displaying a meagre stock; but of bureaux, of house of business, of the name of Lecoq, not a trace. I entered the shop, and made inquiries of a sad-looking young woman who sat behind the counter. She had never heard of Lecoq's bureaux; she did not know any one of the name. I thanked her, and went on, utterly bewildered indeed now. I made other inquiries with a similar result; it was plain that no such firm, no such business existed in Paris; that Herbert Townshend had no employment there; or, if he had any, it must be of a discreditable nature, since he had thus schemed to disguise it; and that the whole story, in which his poor mother had believed with such trust and consolation, was a falsehood.

I wandered about Paris all day; found there was no post to England except by means of some complicated communication with Versailles, which I could not get any one to make intelligible to me; procured a room in a dingy old hotel in the Luxembourg quarter, slept ill, and arose next day with the load of perplexity and dread as heavy as before. There was nothing to be done. I must go back to London, break the horrid truth to Herbert's mother, and then we must all only bear it, and

wait until the misguided young man should make some sign. Again I walked Paris all day, and observing the people under the reign of the Commune, wondered not a little to find them going about their usual avocations. I intended to return to London by the night-train, and I dined at five in the afternoon on one of the boulevards, at a café which I was fortunate enough to find open. I was sitting at a little table close to the door, taking coffee, when Herbert Townshend, in the uniform of an officer of the National Guard, passed me, walking with another man. They were walking quickly, and astonishment held me motionless for a little while; but I shook it off, darted after them, came up with them, and caught Townshend by the left arm. He turned with an instinctive ferocity, significant of the time, and an oath which the sight of me arrested on his lips.

'You here, Digby!' he said, trying to smile. 'What on earth has brought you to Paris, *en pleine Commune*? Anything wrong with Alice?'

'Nothing. I have come to Paris entirely to see you.'

'Indeed! And who told you I was in Paris? Certainly not my mother or Alice, for they do not know.'

'They do not know. I was not told; I guessed; and, as it was indispensably necessary to your own interests that I should speak with you, I came to Paris, expecting to find you at Messrs Lecoq's.' He gave me a furious look, and, turning to his companion, asked him to excuse him, as he must give me his attention, I being a member of his family. The Frenchman bowed, bade us adieu, and turned down an adjoining street, leaving us facing one another on the pavement. I do not know whether Herbert Townshend felt guilty and uncomfortable, or only angry, but I know I felt all three.

'I presume you do not mean to communicate your important news to me in the street,' he said, with his most supercilious air, 'and therefore we had better turn in here.' He indicated, not the café I had just left, but another, of much less respectable appearance, where several gloomy-looking men were talking in sullen groups.

I assented; we went in; and Herbert called for cigars and absinthé. Having leisurely lighted his cigar, he puffed away the smoke, and said: 'Now that we are alone, will you explain the meaning of a proceeding which strikes me as an unwarrantable impertinence?'

'Don't take that tone with me,' I said; 'it will not avail. I have no wish to injure you personally, and, for Alice's sake, I would make a very considerable effort to save you. You had better know at once that I have found you out.—Don't look like that; you will attract attention. There is no such business as Lecoq's; you are not an employé there, or anywhere else; you were not in Paris during the winter; you were in London, where Burton and I saw you one night at the corner of Eccleston Square; you lived in London for five months, under the name of Thomas Foster, at 9 Guy Street, Wandsworth Road, and all your letters to your mother were fraudulent and false. What you really are, I do not know, but I fear you have entered on a life of danger, as I know it has already led to your committing a crime.'

'Indeed!' said Herbert, pulling his long moustache, and trying to preserve his supercilious air,

but unable to hide from me his real uneasiness and dread. 'Suppose all this you have advanced were true, I do not see that it is criminal. A man has led a double life before now, without his motive being a guilty one.'

'Has a man ever robbed his widowed mother and his orphan sister without his motive being a guilty one?'

Abruptly, he seized me by the collar. The suddenness of the action took me by surprise, and I could not rise for a moment, as he held me down, and showered the most violent imprecations upon me. I struggled up, however, seized his hands, and strove to wrench them off my collar. The people in the café crowded round, and amidst the wildest uproar, my voice was wholly inaudible. But I strove madly with the infuriated man, and after a minute, I suppose—no doubt, the whole scene had not lasted longer—I had seized his hands and held them by the wrists, while he was still foaming with rage. But then, after a rapid glance at the bystanders, he exclaimed in French: 'My friends, this man is an enemy, a traitor, a spy. I know him, and I denounce him. He is here in the interests of our tyrants, the beaten generals of Versailles, and the coward of Sedan. Help me to arrest him; we will take him to the Hôtel-de-Ville, and let him tell his lies there. *Vive la Commune!*'

Long before he had done speaking, they had flung themselves upon me, and I was but one man among a score of raging fiends. I felt myself violently pushed and dragged into the street, hurried along through a hooting crowd by a smaller body of men, who wrangled and cursed around me. I saw a huge building and ranks of soldiery; then I was struck on the head and sank down insensible from the grasp of my captors. When I came to my senses, I was in a prison-cell, stretched on a trundle-bed chained to the wall; a stone pitcher full of water was on a small rude table by my side; and the first sound of which I was conscious was the tramp of the sentinel in the passage outside the iron door.

Days passed, and became weeks, and still I lay in my prison cell. The jailer was not altogether brutal, and my wound was dressed and cared for. I remember all that time very dimly. I was frequently delirious, and frequently in a state of half-stupor. There were people about me sometimes besides the jailer, but I never knew them, nor had I any distinct idea of what they did there. But there came a day when I felt that I was getting well; my mind was clearing, my memory was becoming distinct. With this change came dreadful suffering, impatience, suspense, and horrible inquietude for those whom I loved. What must they have been suffering? Did they believe me to be dead? When did I begin to hope? I do not know. The rumours which reach the ear of the most mercilessly guarded captives began to reach mine. The 'Versaillais' must come soon. But should we all be murdered before they came? Was the dreadful drama of the massacre of September to be revived with worthy descendants of the *Septembriseurs*? Who had they already murdered? But I must not dwell on this time; every one can picture to himself what its horrors and its sufferings were. One day, bright even in prison, after some hours, during which a vague and distant noise had been succeeded by the con-

tinuous roll of musketry, and every one within the prison walls must have known that the Commune was fighting for its life, a great tumult arose within the prison itself; and while I stood by the door, listening with the sickening eagerness of a captive, it was opened, and two French gentlemen in uniform entered. A third individual was with them, who pounced upon me with a triumphant shout: it was Godfrey Burton. They brought me out into the terrible streets of Paris, among the smouldering fires and the heaps of dead, and they told me what had been done while I lay in my prison, unconscious of the fiendish deeds of the last days of the Commune.

Burton and I had been at work all night, and nearly all day, searching for any trace of Herbert Townshend. He had learned, by the aid of the authorities at Versailles, brought to bear upon the prisoners in their hands, that Herbert was a well-known, and indeed distinguished member of the extreme Red party in Paris, a confidential agent of the International Society, and hence we inferred that he had been doing their business during his secret stay in London, and that he would certainly have taken a prominent part in the concluding scenes of the insurrection. He had not found a trace of him among the living; and we believed, indeed I think we hoped that we might find him among the dead. Of his fate, if captured, there could be no doubt. If he had fallen in the fight, we might conceal the truth from his mother for ever. So we searched, and searched, until our limbs were weary, and our hearts were sick, and until that dreadful indifferent familiarity with scenes of blood, and horror which one hates to think of, but inevitably experiences, had come over us both. Night was coming on, and we, with the escort of two which had been granted us, were wending our way along the Boulevard St Jacques, when we came upon a heap of slain. From the other side, a huge open cart, one of the *voitures de déménagement* used for the removal of the dead, was coming heavily up to this particular piece of its work. Two of the lifeless bodies formed a strange group. They were both in the uniform of the National Guards; torn, bloody, stained, filthy with dust and clay and gunpowder. They were lying, the one man bare-headed, stretched out on the trampled ground, amid a heap of the nameless debris of the place, on his back, the limbs in an easy attitude, and one arm extended, the hand still grasping a shattered gun. But his face was completely hidden by the head of the other man, which, still wearing the *kepi*, rested upon it; while the body lay crosswise upon his breast, the arms flung upon his shoulders, and the limbs, both fractured by shots, in a formless bundle impossible in life. We were looking at this sight, more wearily than sadly, when Burton said: 'What's that hanging along the poor fellow's back, under his *kepi*?' and stepped up to the side of the corpses, which were lying unnoticed: the boulevard was quite empty. He stooped, and I saw long tresses of shining black hair held up in his hand.

'Most extraordinary!' he cried, 'it's a woman,' and gently removing the *kepi*, he turned over the face. I came to his side, and saw that he was right. It was a woman, a beautiful woman, beautiful even in that violent death which had spared the face; had left untouched the fierce grand features,

the rich dark skin, but had not closed the eyes, which stared up at us, black, stony, and awful! 'Her lips were on the man's lips,' said Burton in a whisper, as he gently laid the face down as it was before; 'and the position of the arms—one of them is broken—is not accidental. See how she has clutched him with the other by this shoulder!'

He lifted the head again a little, that I might see; and I did see. I saw that the dead lips of the man, on which the dead lips of the woman rested, the mutilated body of the man clasped in the dead arms of the woman, were the lips and the body of Herbert Townshend. I staggered back against Burton, and whispered the truth in his ear; and he, as he steadied me against the nearest wall, making me sit upon the ground, replied, also in a whisper: 'This, then, is the explanation.'

We sent one of our escort to hire a cart, and we brought Herbert away with us; and we brought the nameless dead woman too; a bad woman, no doubt; a beautiful, fierce creature, who had ruined his life; but she had shared his death, and she loved him. We laid her beside him, in the same grave.

'All you urge is right,' I said to Burton, as we walked up and down the deck of the steamer on our way to Dover: 'there will be no difficulty in keeping the poor mother profoundly ignorant of the truth; but one great embarrassment awaits me; that is, the theft, or rather the loss of the money. When Mrs. Townshend can attend to anything of the kind, her mind will revert to that, and she will wonder at my conduct in the matter. If I don't explain, she may suspect me; and I cannot explain why I did not communicate with the police, and why I did not try to recover the money.'

'Would it not be better to let her think you did recover it?'

'What do you mean?'

'This. You told me she did not know the numbers of the notes, therefore any others will do as well. Give her bank-notes for three hundred and fifty pounds—tell her you have recovered them by the intervention of a clever private detective, unconnected with Scotland Yard. She will never think of doubting you. What is the difficulty?'

'Just this, my dear fellow—that I have not got the money, and that I cannot get it, as nobody knows better than you, or you should not want it. So the thing cannot be done.'

'What a fool I am!' exclaimed Godfrey. 'Here I have been all this time, quite forgetting that you did not know what has happened, and could not know it, until I told you. My uncle is dead—he died the very day you did not come to me with the money, at my hiding-place—and he has left me all his fortune, with the exception of a few legacies—so I can let you have three hundred and fifty pounds, at fair interest, if you will not let me give your Alice the money as a wedding-present, instead of a big unmeaning brooch, like a lump of glass, or something of that kind, which will cost more. You will be paying for your own furniture, while the poor old lady believes she is making you a present of it; that is all.'

I tried, not very successfully, to thank him, but he silenced me.

'Hush, my dear fellow,' he said; 'with such

sad work as ours before us, don't let us think of such small things.'

After this fashion was negotiated Burton's Loan.

By the combined influence of threats and bribes, Mr William Brown was induced to own that he knew more than he had acknowledged of the affairs of Thomas Foster. We discovered from his revelations that the unhappy young man had lost at play some of the funds of the International Society with which he was intrusted, and, as that body does not pardon such a breach of trust, and may be safely calculated upon to avenge it, he had been driven to the crime, which he had no doubt hoped to conceal by the replacement of the money.

The grief of Herbert's mother was severe, and is lasting. But she believes him to have fallen nobly, doing his duty, on the right side! And Alice, my wife, is almost consoled by the conviction that her mother will never learn the story of Burton's Loan.

PUNISHMENT IN EFFIGY.

THE effigy of a person, in the earlier stages of civilisation, was never held to be a mere likeness, but was identified more or less with the very person himself. The least educated classes in civilised countries still exhibit a survival of the old belief in the punishments they bestow upon effigies. They serve the figure as they would like to serve the original, if he were not dead or absent. There was probably much of this temper in our forefathers when they first burned Guy Fawkes; the 5th of November was no mere day of amusement. It is in this temper, mixing religious conviction and pleasure, that the effigy of Judas is so severely punished in Holy Week by the nations of Southern Europe and their descendants in America. On Maundy-Thursdays night in Mexico, people go into the streets to see Judas Iscariot hung in effigy to the lamp-posts, and fired at with squibs and crackers. The sailors of Portuguese ships are famous for their flogging of Judas on the Saturday in Holy Week, and when one of their ships is resting in a foreign port on that day, there is usually a large concourse of natives to witness the religious sport. Some persons passing along the quay at Havre early on that day, in 1865, were surprised to see a human figure suspended from the rigging of a Portuguese ship, and supposed that one of the sailors had hanged himself. At half-past ten, however, when the church bells began to ring, the figure was lowered, and the sailors belaboured the hated dummy until they had deprived it of head, arms, and legs; it was then thrown into the water, the police regulations not allowing it to be burned at the stake, which would have been its last end in Portugal. In the Holy Week of 1868, when the Portuguese schooner *Vigilante* was known to be lying beside the quay, a large crowd of the citizens of Havre collected in anticipation of the fun: the effigy of Judas, on this occasion, after a sound drubbing and repeated sousings, was thrown to the French mob, and the boys soon pulled him limb from limb. The *Correio Examinateur*, in the same year, described at great length a flagellation of the Judas effigy which took place in that city on Holy Saturday. The Portuguese seamen in this instance pre-
faced the thrashing of the apostate with a solemn funeral procession through the streets. Twenty

men marched in front, singing what the reporter oddly calls 'an epithalamium'; the effigy of Judas was laid upon an open bier, and, by a very natural anachronism, dressed in the blue shirt and long boots of a stevedore—perhaps to point the moral that Judases, like Guy Fawkeses, are to be found in all ages and all occupations. When the procession returned to the ship, the effigy was hung on the yard, and came to its end by being fired into with pistols. The moral of the South European punishment of the effigy of Judas is indicated about as distinctly as it is possible in the argumentation of the big and bushy North American of Utica who visited Artemus Ward's show. 'He walks up to the cago containin' my wax figgers of the Lord's Supper, and ceases Judas Iscariot by the feet and drags him on the ground. He then commenced fur to pound him as hard as he cood. "What onder the son are you about?" cried I. Sez he: "What did you bring this pussy-lanermus cuss hero fur?" and he hit the wax figger another tremanjus blow on the head. Sez I: "You egrejus ass, that air's a wax figger, a representashun of the false 'Postle.'" Sez he: "That's all very well fur you to say: but I tell you, old man, that Judas Iscariot can't shew hisself in Utiky with impunity!"—with which observashun he caved in Judassiss bed.'

Neither the South Europeans nor the fabulous North American in taking vengeance upon the effigy of Judas are likely to suppose that the injuries they inflict upon it will bring any increase of trouble upon Judas himself. But in earlier ages it would have been taken for a waste of energy and time to ill-treat an effigy unless the hated original could thereby be reached and substantially damaged. Theocritus tells us of the sorcerers of old Greece who pretended to kill the enemies of their clients by doing magical mischief to their doll likenesses. The belief that an effigy and the person 'effigiated,' to use an old word, were sympathetically identified, and that hurt done to the former reached the latter, lived on to a very late time in Europe. We are by no means sure that this belief is not at present being traded on by the hole-and-corner magicians and sorcerers who are at times dragged out into the light, and made to disgorge their robberies from simple servant-girls. Mr. A. B. Mitford, in his interesting *Tales of Old Japan*, tells us that this form of effigy-persecution is still carried on by Japanese girls whose lovers have become faithless. The jilted and jealous maiden rises at two o'clock in the morning, dresses herself in white, and carries a little straw figure—the effigy of the faithless one—to the sacred grove around some Shintô shrine. The trees are supposed to be under the special protection of the god to whom the shrine is dedicated, and any injury done to them arouses him to vengeance. Taking the effigy in her left hand, and hammer in the right, she sacrilegiously nails the figure to one of the holy trees, praying the god to slay the traitorous youth; and vowing that if he grant her prayer, she will pull out the nails which offend the god by wounding his consecrated tree. Night after night she strikes in two or more nails, believing that every nail will shorten her unfaithful lover's life, because the god will be sure at the last, in order to save his tree, to strike the young man dead.

Execution by effigy seems to the practical minds

of the English (as it did to the Romans) too puerile to be used by a serious nation. We should find no satisfaction for our own indignation, and see no indication of the majesty of our law, in punishing a criminal's picture, because we could not punish the criminal himself. The French, however, have always treated symbols with gravity the defacing of the portraits of the last emperor, and the destruction of the Vendôme Column, were forms of effigy-punishment. Execution by effigy was a solemn legal institution in France prior to the first Revolution. It was treated of at length, some thirty years before its suppression, by M. Bourcher d'Argis, an assistant of Diderot and D'Alembert in the *Encyclopédie*. He attempted to find its origin in the custom (mentioned by Plutarch) of sometimes substituting a proxy-effigy for the person destined to be sacrificed at a triumph. He says that some execution by effigy was used by the ancient Greeks; but the Greek punishment of *Stele*, to which, I suppose, he refers, consisted simply in engraving the name and the offence of the criminal in large letters upon a pillar.

The French law vindicated its outraged honour upon the effigy of a criminal in cases of contumacy, that is, when the criminal absented himself or took to flight. It is not impossible that the condemned sometimes secreted himself in the crowd, and saw with comical relief his picture or his doll suffering in his stead. The usage first appeared in France in the time of Louis VI. (*le Gros*), at the beginning of the twelfth century; and the most ancient example we have of such an execution is that of Thomas de Marne, the foe of the bishops, whom this royal favourite of the church condemned for the crime of high treason. Passing over some centuries, we find in the *Ordonnance Criminelle* of 1670 an attempt to regulate these histrionic executions. Punishments in effigy were only to be permitted when the criminal was condemned to death: when the criminal was condemned to the galleys, perpetual banishment, the whip, or the wheel, but could not be got at, his name only was to be written on a ticket, and fastened up in some public place, to put the people in mind of his crime, and make him infamous. When the criminal was condemned to death, but had managed to escape from the grasp of the law, the arrest and punishment of the guilty seem to have been ludicrously carried out from point to point with his effigy. The 'guy,' as we should call it, of the defaulter was incarcerated in the prison; the executioner solemnly entered its cell with an escort and all the apparatus of punishment; the picture or doll was given up to him, and it was led to the place of punishment with pomp and circumstance, and made to undergo the fate intended for the fortunate deserter whom it represented. I do not know whether the *Ordonnance* restricted the effigy to a single counterfeit resemblance. It is certain that before this regulation, the effigies had been multiplied, after the manner, although not to the countless extent, of our Guy Fawkeses. Thus, the Duke of La Vallette, who was condemned to the block in 1639, was beheaded in effigy in three different cities on the same day—Paris, Bordeaux, and Bayonne. The criminal himself was all the while safe in England. Although the Revolution abolished the legal executions by effigy, popular animosity still continued

to visit its dislike of its contemporary enemies upon their images. Burnings and hangings of stuffed dolls became parts of the programme of the festivals of the Republic. Thus, in the Rheims Revolution feast, in 1793, the pope, the 'coalesced tyrants,' and Lafayette were burned together in effigy in the old religious metropolis of France.

Popular vengeance upon the effigies of the unpopular always appears with the regularity of a law in epochs of unusual excitement. We find instances in the religious and political struggles in the Low Countries, where the Romish clergy were often punished by deputy in this fashion by the Protestants, and the Protestants by the Romanists. Constantine Pontio, the confessor of the Emperor Charles V. in whose arms the monarch is said to have died with a Lutheran confession on his lips, was soon afterwards thrown into prison by the Inquisition on a suspicion of heresy. There he died, and as the Inquisition could proceed no further against him in person, they contented themselves with burning his effigy. Matthew Lanoy, a priest, was hung in effigy, as a protest against his disorderly life.

The most fertile period of effigy-making and effigy-punishment in our own English history is undoubtedly to be looked for in the festivity with which the restoration of the monarchy and the church were celebrated on the first anniversary of the Restoration day. On the 29th of May 1661, the whole nation seems to have gone mad with joy, if we may rely on the glowing accounts sent up from so many cities and towns by 'our own correspondents' of that period, to the two loyalist newspapers, *The Kingdom's Intelligencer* and the *Mercurius Publicus*. At Bury St Edmunds, the whole town 'was made an arbour; the streets covered with rushes, the houses hung with garlands and tapestries.' After a loyal sermon, attended by the 'purged corporation,' who 'have freed themselves from their tyrannous taskmasters,' the entire populace followed 'the reverend effigies of Hugh Peters (that grand impostor), bearing in one hand the late rebellious Covenant, and in the other a string of bodkins, thimbles, &c. which he gleaned from his sisters in iniquity; under his arm the silly Directory.' The common hangman led the effigy of the courageous and eccentric parliamentary chaplain, and the common beadle followed it, and whipped it (or, as the reporter says, 'him') through the streets. The figure was hung on a gibbet, with a picture of Oliver Cromwell and a list of regicides, and burned amidst volleys of shot and joyous shouting. At Halesworth, in the same county, writes another correspondent: 'We thought our zeal to the person of his Majesty would be best exemplified by shewing the odium which we had for Oliver Cromwell, his most tyrannical opposer, whose effigies was for some time exposed to view upon our pillory, and then with the Covenant and Engagement sacrificed in a bonfire of above five hundred fagots, and with volleys of shot, of at least five hundred in a volley.' The great Protector and his chaplain were the favourite victims in most places. In Sherborne in Dorset, however, the Marquis of Argyll was selected for this effigy-martyrdom. In other places, idealised effigies of the Covenant and of Anabaptism were hung and burned. At Exeter, 'a counterfeit of a Covenanter' was driven to the gibbet 'on a poor jade.' At Reading, the copy of

the Covenant, which had been fixed up in church, was sent to the common jail 'as soon as it was known that the parliament had condemned it,' and kept there in durance until the 29th of May, when it was dragged through the streets by a rope, and finally burned to ashes by the under-jailer in the market-place, 'in memory of the precious blood of William, late Archbishop of Canterbury, spilt by this Covenant: for 'twas the Covenant murdered him, who was born in, and was a great benefactor to this town of Reading.'

The vexation and rage of the English people against the luckless Admiral Byng found vent in a wholesale hanging and burning of his effigy. At Gateshead, Sunderland, Shields, Newcastle, and other northern towns, the hard sentence finally executed upon Byng's person at Portsmouth in 1757, was savagely rehearsed upon his effigy in the summer of 1756. At Newcastle, the effigy was seated on a donkey, the name 'Byng' fixed upon the figure, and standards carried before it and behind it with the legends: 'Oh, back your sails, for God's sake; a shot may hit the ship!' 'This is the villain that would not fight.' The effigy was hung on a gallows, severely maltreated, and burned. Posterity has reversed the hasty judgments of his actual and his histrionic executioners. The spite vented upon his effigy was in part directed against the ministry, which had sent out too weak and ill-furnished a fleet. Ten years later, a prime minister, the most unpopular in the whole series of modern English statesmen—if we may call Lord Bute an Englishman—was burnt in effigy in the cider counties, as the supposed author of the oppressive duties on cider and perry, known as the Cider Bill. At Taunton, in Somersetshire, says a journal of the time, 'thousands stood by applauding.'

IN MEMORIAM.

O SUMMER sky, so blue and clear;
O sparkling eyes, without a tear,
And joyous hearts without a fear.

O earth so sweet, and roses fair,
And bright birds glistening through the air,
Trilling soft music everywhere.

O form I loved so true and well,
Nought on this earth can break the spell
That links me to thy narrow cell,

Where lies thy quiet, peaceful breast,
In childhood's hours I've oft caressed—
Those loving lips I've often pressed.

O life is sweet when love is young,
To cheer us as we urge along
This toilsome path, this busy throng.

I think of thee at morning light;
I see thee in my dreams by night;
Thou art my guardian angel bright.

I'll love thee still while life shall last;
Nor fame nor fortune e'er can blast
Thy radiance o'er my memory cast.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.
Also sold by all Booksellers.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 531.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

THE public are awakening to an unpleasant fact. Railway travelling is seen to be attended with extreme jeopardy to life and limb. Observedly, there is a graduated scale of danger. On some lines with a large passenger traffic, singularly few accidents occur. On others, more particularly those with a number of branches and junctions, the slaughter-rate is considerable. Taking the general aggregate, there may be but a small percentage of deaths, but the casualties occur in a most appalling fashion—a dozen or so at a time, and certainly one's confidence is very painfully shaken. What an outcome to the grandest mechanical invention of the age! A process of transit avowedly the source of vast national prosperity is discovered to be conducted in so slovenly a manner, as to have become a matter of universal terror. There is no disguising the position of affairs. In entering a train, you have no certainty of getting to your destination alive. At every moment, particularly in approaching a station, where some idiotic shunting may be going on, you are haunted by dismal apprehensions. In the old highwaymen times, people made their wills before setting out on a journey. They need to do the same now. Starting in robust health by rail, you may return a few hours afterwards a poor shattered being, with legs or arms broken; or, what is as likely, you may come back as a disfigured corpse nailed up in one of the coffins, of which a proper stock at the principal stations is wisely kept on hand for emergencies. Rather unpleasant this! One does not like the idea of returning home smashed to pieces, secured in a coffin, on which, by way of distinction, is possibly chalked No. 15. Such a consequence has just ensued.

There is an old fancy that soldiering is the most perilous thing in which a man can be engaged. Quite a mistake. After all the varieties of shot and shell that have been invented, comparatively few are killed in battle. The bulk of the firing is all noise, smoke, and flurry, ending with great masses being taken prisoners, and so matters are brought

to a conclusion. Take it all in all, war is not so deadly as railway travelling. It is only at rare times there is a protracted war-struggle. The Crimean war, which lasted two years, gave 2755 as the entire number of British soldiers killed, or 1377 for each year. So much killing for once in a way is hardly worth speaking of. Our railways, as a regular thing, do nearly as much in the killing line per annum as was effected by all the engines of destruction in the Crimea. The number of persons slain on railways in the United Kingdom in 1872, was 1145; the greater proportion being in England; 168 in Scotland, and only 47 in Ireland. The destruction in 1873, when Scotland increased its proportion, is understood to have been greater; the casualties every year appearing to augment in number and fatality proportionately to the extension of lines, the connection with branches, and the marvellous increase of traffic.

Not a very complimentary thing this to the genius of the age! The machine, so to speak of railways, is worked at such a pitch as to have got beyond any ordinary means of control. In its vastness and complication, it has outstripped human intelligence—at least that kind of intelligence which is allotted for its guidance. Nor is such a result at all surprising. The railway system grew up suddenly. The world was unprepared for it. So long as it was on a comparatively simple footing, things did tolerably well. When it became what it is—an overgrown and chaotic network of main lines and branches all over the country, with endless rivalries as to speed, and scrambling for traffic—it was beyond the capacity of those who are practically charged with its management. Looking to what is of daily occurrence, the source of the evil lies not in defective mechanism, but in the want of delicately acute intelligence, care, forethought, and sense of danger. According to ordinary phrase, the defect is 'human infirmity.' The introduction of what is termed the 'block system' has been urged as the only safeguard. The block system is just this: No train shall quit a station unless the next station in advance is telegraphed to be clear.

Very plausible. But, after all, we have to rely on human agency. What if telegraphing is neglected? What if there be a want of common-sense and discretion? By leading to a mere reliance on mechanical details, the cure may possibly be worse than the disease.

It is scarcely fair to throw so much blame on railway directors. From all we have known of them—and we have seen something behind the scenes—directors are inspired by a sincere wish to save life and property as well as to accommodate the public. As must be well known, they have been beset by demands for a high rate of speed, and for a frequency of trains hardly compatible with security. All things considered, the wonder is they have done so much and so well. The safe running of fast trains, one after the other, with only a few minutes of interval, is a kind of standing miracle. Sir E. Watkin, chairman of the London and South-western Company, mentioned a few remarkable facts at a recent meeting. 'During the past half-year, they had carried 11,500,000 passengers, exclusive of 20,000 season ticket-holders; they had run 250,000 trains, and only one passenger had lost his life, the casualty being due to the imprudence of the passenger himself. As regards mechanical contrivances to prevent accidents, they were apt to induce men to depend more on them than their own watchfulness.' When we learn that on some of the principal lines, there are run as many as a thousand trains a day, all under the guidance of a class of persons ill-prepared by education for the duty, and perhaps toilworn and overburdened with responsibility, the conclusion arrived at is, that human nature—railway human nature—is overtasked, and that too much is expected from it.

For the chaotic and haphazard system that has sprung up, no one is distinctly to blame. At the outset, it was thought that independent action by competing companies best accorded with British enterprise. There was likewise no expectation that the development of traffic would be so enormous. All prognostications on the subject have been grotesquely falsified. Towns which were supposed to be only capable of supporting a few stage-coaches and carriers' carts, now require daily numerous long trains for passengers and goods-traffic. The time has indeed come for lines purely devoted to the carriage of goods. But where is the money to make them? Already, about seven hundred millions of pounds have been sunk in railways in this country—much, no doubt, wasted in parliamentary struggles, much wasted in laying down competing lines where one would have sufficed. The mischief, however, is done, and wisdom comes too late. Wherein are we to find a remedy?

Making the best of things as they stand, government might be induced to take possession of the whole railway system at a valuation, thereby arresting the further wastefulness of capital, and enforcing a higher degree of discipline in the conducting of trains. Strict rules for this latter

purpose alone cannot too soon be made, matter of statutory enactment. We need only signify regulations as to the speed and proper timing of trains, the examination as to educational capabilities of railway servants, the limitation of the hours of labour, the shunting of trains, and better organisation of signals. An amendment in the method of conducting trains seems to be specially desirable. Instead of leaving all to the driver, who has perhaps enough to do with his engine, there might advantageously be a director in the quality of pilot seated in front, whose duty should consist in attending to signals, and warning the driver of danger. It sometimes happens, from caprice or fancied convenience, that the tender is put before the engine, by which arrangement the driver, possibly with his back to the signals, is unable to see whether they are set at danger. On a late occasion, partly from a cause of this kind, and partly from carelessness in shunting a mineral train on to a main line when an express passenger train was approaching, a collision took place, and seventeen persons lost their lives, the driver included. No such catastrophe would have occurred had a proper outlook been kept. There was a strange degree of negligence all round which cannot be too strongly reprehended. Had every one concerned in this wholesale sacrifice of human beings conspired to destroy a batch of confiding passengers, they could not have done the thing more effectually. Yet, it is doubtful if they will be made to suffer in a penal sense for the terrible error of which they have been guilty. If brought to trial, the most paltry excuses and extenuations will, of course, be eloquently offered in their behalf.

Besides a better method of piloting trains, there is equal, if not greater need for a more numerous and superior class of station-keepers and signalmen. The ignorance and carelessness of station-masters, combined with the recklessness of the drivers of mineral trains, may be set down as the cause of so many hideous catastrophes at shuntings. We happen to know a railway station, where the keeper and porters in charge apathetically allow any children who are playing about to open and shut the gates at a busy level-crossing; as if unconscious of the extreme danger incurred. In short, it is to the blundering stupidity of the subordinate officials on many of the lines in the rural districts that the majority of accidents are evidently due. We feel assured that unless there be a thorough reform in this department, such as may be enforced under severe penalties by government inspectors, there is little chance of the number of casualties being lessened.

We cannot suppose that railway companies will present any obstacle to some such rigorous enforcement of rules to insure safety; for it must be generally felt that if the present loose state of things continues, travelling by railway will diminish. Already, the public are so much alarmed, that many, to our knowledge, will not risk themselves in a railway train. What a bitter practical

satire on the vaunted improvements of modern times, would (even on a limited scale) be the re-introduction of four-horse stage-coaches, from a terror of transit by railways! w. c.

BEAR-HUNTING.

'Up with you, old boy, if you want to get a bear.' Such were the words that aroused me from the deep Indian morning sleep, so refreshing to a European after the tossing and restlessness of a night in the hot weather. Yet in a moment I was awake and sitting up, all eagerness to start, for bear-shooting was yet new to me. We were a party of three, all men in the service, who had managed to get leave for two months in the hot weather, and had gladly gone far away from the cantonments into the heart of the Ghauts, as the hills which run down the west of India are called. Our principal object was to bag a few of the large tigers which roam about these hills; but we were not averse to anything in the way of sport.

The bears which we were to seek for on this particular morning were of the common Indian black kind, clumsy in gait, and obstinate in character. Clothes were hastily put on, rifles looked to, and the ponies having been brought round, we mounted and rode off, at about 3 A.M. followed by a dusky crowd of villagers carrying guns, water, and the thousand-and-one things without which it is assumed that a European is unable to exist in India. Each man of the party was wrapped in a garment, if it can be so called, which more resembled a coarse sheet than anything else. This—or these, for sometimes there were more than one—was wrapped round all parts of the wearer, except the legs, and the mouth was in almost every instance covered, for the Hindu has great fear of fever. As the day advances, it is curious to see these cloths gradually unwound from the body, and passed again and again about the head, until the latter appears of an enormous size, and the general appearance of each 'nigger' suggests a mushroom with black legs. On we rode through the jungle for an hour or more, in darkness, and almost in silence, for the ordinary Englishman is seldom conversational before breakfast, and the birds in the trees either shewed the same desire for quiet, or were asleep. At length we arrived at the foot of the hill, or rather at a point from which the ascent grew so steep that it was advisable to leave our ponies to await our return. Before commencing the climb, we looked round to see that all we wanted was there, and then, having lightened ourselves and burdened the natives, to handicap them, as A. said, as much as possible, up we went, scrambling and tumbling in the dark over trees and stones, till, without any greater mishap than the sudden fall of my rifle, accompanied by a nigger, over a huge boulder, we arrived at the crest of the line of hills which we were to occupy.

Our mode of procedure, and our reasons for

adopting it, were as follows. The bear, which during the day lies hid in some cave or shady recess near the summit of a hill, at night descends into the valleys in search of food, but at the first dawn returns to his home, in time to avoid the heat of the sun. The object of the hunter is to meet him while so returning: to this end it is usual to post a line of natives at some distance apart, along the tops of the hills, with orders that, if any bear be seen, the fact shall be telegraphed by signal along the line to the hunters, who wait at about the centre of the string of watchers.

The beaters, as the villagers are always called, even when they do not beat, having been posted under the superintendence of the head shekarry, we sat down to wait for dawn.

Gradually the black of the sky was tinged with colour in the east, and the stars grew paler and paler: trees unseen before seemed to grow into being, until at last, far down in the plain, bushes were visible, which, to an enthusiastic eye, looked remarkably like bears. But they never were bears, and any hints that they resembled them were received with a grunt—expressive of as much contempt as he dared shew—by Succaram, the old shekarry. The light grew brighter and brighter, and all the plain at last was clearly visible, but not so the bears; and we, with the natural disgust of Englishmen roused out of bed before light, and to no purpose, were beginning to grumble, when Succaram was seen making signals for us to come to him.

'What is it?' we shouted.

'A bear! sahib.'

'Let's go and see.'

And sure enough there were 'pugs' of a bear, of the day before, Succaram said; but that was enough. The footprint, or 'pug,' of a bear closely resembles that of a man, but is rather wider at the toes, in front of which may always be seen the print of the claws, so that there is little chance of mistaking one for the other. We had hardly resumed our position, when we saw a native running as if for his life in our direction, and shouting 'Bear! bear!' loud enough to have warned the animal of which he spoke. A word or two from A. and some disrespectful remarks as to his female relations from Succaram, reduced him to reason; and trembling, partly from excitement, partly from fear that his carelessness would be the cause of loss of part of his pay, the beater explained how a man about a mile away had signalled the approach of a bear towards the part of the hill where he stood.

Away we went as hard as we could run, B. the youngest, and the last from home, leading, as he should; I second; and A. a bad third, using, I am afraid, strong language at the excitement which made us youngsters in such a great hurry. A. soon gave up, though I could still hear him grumbling; and I, after a time, dropped into a quiet walk; but B. though the ground was rough and covered with loose stones, still ran on, turning

now and then to beckon us up. At last, he too broke into a walk, until, on reaching the top of a small rise, he turned, and cried out: 'Come on, you fellows; there are two of them!' Off we went again; and as I reached the spot where B. had stood, I saw him in the act of firing at two black backs which rose above the top of the dried grass with which the hillside was covered. Down I went at once to him, though, as I ran, I noticed that B.'s shots did not seem to produce much effect. As I reached him, the bears turned at about twenty-five yards from us, and came up at us. Like an idiot, I did not wait until they were clear of the grass, but fired both my barrels at the mass of black hair which alone I could see; and, it is scarcely necessary to say, my shots produced little or no effect beyond a grunt. We had now four empty barrels, and two bears. On came the bears, not angrily, but rather as if bored at so much noise, until at last they cleared the grass about ten paces from us, and then, suddenly changing their direction, passed close on one side of us, who stood there, feeling rather foolish, and trying to reload and to get our breath. A. now came up just as the bears cleared the far side of the crest, and rolled the hindmost over down the hill. Then commenced a grand fire from us youngsters, which continued, without much harm to the bear, as long as a patch of black hair remained in sight. At last, when A. having sat down and recovered his breath, and could speak, we received our punishment, in a long detail of misadventures. Suddenly, we were on the alert. Succaram jumped and cried: 'Sahib! there is the bear under the tree!' And so he was; rolled up like a black ball at the root of a tree about half-way down the side of the hill, and about three-quarters of a mile away. Off we went by a circuitous path, and very quietly, for fear of another mistake. Slowly we crept through the jungle, striving not to break a stick or rustle a leaf; slowly we came out into the open, and crept along until we saw the top of the tree under which the bear lay.

A. evidently determined to take first shot, motioned us to fall behind him. On we crawled until the stem of the tree was clear against the sky, and then the root, and then the ground beyond, was visible, but no bear. At last, when we were about fifteen yards from the tree, we heard a grunt, and a few leaves pattered on the ground. A. jumped up and fired. Out rushed the bear, a great deal more frightened than hurt, until a second shot broke his hind-leg, and tumbled him down the hill. Away he went, on two legs, for A.'s first shot, we found, had broken his fore-leg; away for about a mile, up-hill and down-hill, not seeming to know quite where he wanted to go, until at last, to our delight, he turned, and came back towards us, meaning to pass a little to our right. We ran down to cut him off, but were too late, for we heard him grunting in front of us. Then commenced a running-fight through the open jungle, in which A. was outpaced, and B. and I alternately fired over each other's head at the bear, when he halted. It was not very sportsmanlike, but it was very good fun. At last we lost sight of the bear, and were beginning to think of how to excuse ourselves to A. when a native who was perched on a tree told us that our black friend had passed round the hill. About a hundred and

fifty yards farther we found him, very sick, under a tree. We went in at him together, and with a couple of shots sent him to rejoin the deceased members of his family. A. now came up, looking volumes of bad language, and, when we shewed him the bear, said only: 'And how many holes have you made in his skin?' This idea had never struck us, that it might be wise to kill an animal without spoiling the skin, so we answered nothing, but sat down to wait until the operation of skinning had been completed.

We reached the tents about half-past nine, breakfasted, smoked a cheroot, and waited with impatience for the return of Succaram, who had been sent to get intelligence of any game which might be afoot.

About eleven o'clock, just as the day was beginning to be at its hottest, the shakarry appeared at the door of the tent, and reported that the big tiger of which we were in search had left that part of the country, but that a bear had been marked down in a cave about three miles away. We knew that it was useless to try for the tiger, as in the hills they often travel twenty or more miles in a night; so we decided to get the bear. But it was voted *nem. con.* that it was not worth while to go out in the heat of the day for a bear, and our excursion was therefore postponed until the afternoon. Orders were given for everything to be ready at three, and Succaram was sent to provide for the due watching of the cave in which the bear lay, and for his being followed if, which was unlikely, he should leave it.

The long hot hours in the middle of the day are always wearisome in India above all others, but never more so than when passed in the jungle, with but few books, and these chosen generally more for their solid character, rendering them likely to 'last longer,' than anything more amusing. However, the time went by, partly in sleep, partly in talk, until 'tiffin' arrived, after which a cheroot carried us on up to three o'clock, at which hour we proposed to start.

As punctually to the hour as it is possible for anything to be in India, our procession set off, with little or no difference in its order to that of the morning. Slowly we proceeded along the valley, which, as usual in the Ghauts, was cut up into small fields near the village, but gradually, as we went farther and farther from the huts, resumed its character of open jungle; while the hills to the right and left were covered with masses of foliage, which obstructed the view, as much as the thick undergrowth of thorns and cane did the passage of the hunter.

After about an hour, we came to the place where it was judged that we should leave the ponies. Having dismounted, we crept carefully and silently in single file along the narrow jungle-path, and up the hill, until at length we came to the edge of an open piece of ground which extended to the top of the hill. About one hundred and fifty yards from the edge of the forest where we stood, we could see the mouth of a cave, which, however, to our inexperienced eyes, looked far too small to allow of the passage of so large an animal as a bear. Yet the villagers declared that he was there, so it remained only to get him out.

This was to be effected by means of what are in courtesy called 'fireworks,' though they but little resemble the brilliant artificial meteors which in

England go by that name. Fireworks consist generally of two kinds—rockets and flower-pots; the former, a feeble imitation of those which we know by the same name; the latter, merely hollow cases of clay, which are filled with powder, and are intended to explode after having been thrown into the cave.

Our plan was as follows. Knowing that probably the bear, on being driven out of his cave, would strike up-hill, for such is their almost invariable course, we three, with our spare gun-bearers, were to be posted about one hundred yards above the mouth of the cave: the beaters were ordered to form a line along the edge of the wood, but not to shew themselves, unless the bear seemed inclined to go down the hill, in which case they were, by yelling and screaming, to drive him up to us. Succaram and one or two others who professed to entertain a thorough contempt for a bear, were to throw in the fireworks, covered by our rifles. The task of Succaram may appear dangerous, but, as generally carried out, it consisted merely of a hurried throwing of flower-pots and a rocket or two, and an immediate rush in the opposite direction, without regard to the probable effect of the missiles.

We took our post, and the signal was given to begin. The flower-pots were lighted and thrown into the cave, where, one after another, we heard their dull explosions. But nothing came. Slowly the smoke curled out of the cave, but, to our astonishment, it grew thicker and thicker, until at last a tongue of flame was seen, and then another, until the dry grass which stood near the mouth of the den took fire, and we began to fear that the whole side of the hill would soon be ignited.

'If he's there, this must bring him out,' said A.; and almost as he spoke, with a grunt and a grumble, out rolled a huge bear in a very bad temper at the disturbance of his sleep. Up he came at us, lounging along, as bears do, sometimes hidden by the tufts of grass, at others shewing clearly his white snout and the horse-shoe on his chest, and halting now and then to grunt at the fire. We lay quietly waiting, for the colour of our clothes so exactly matched the dry grass, that the bear did not see us until he came within thirty yards of us; then I, in my excitement, pulled the trigger, and knocked him over and over down the hill.

'Come along,' said A.; 'we've got him. He's meat.' And down we went, restrained only from running by dread of what 'the captain' might say. Even he was growing a little excited, and we came down the hill at a good swinging pace. Men placed in trees directed us to the path which the bear had taken, and we presently saw him moving slowly through the trees on the other side of a nullah, about one hundred yards away. B. raised his rifle, but A. pulled it down. Silently we crept through the dense undergrowth towards where we had seen the bear, and after crossing the bed of the nullah, found that the jungle was more open, so that in a few minutes we saw our black friend sitting under a tree, growling horribly.

'Now, run in at him, if you like!' said A. And in we went. The bear rose on his hind-legs, and advanced to meet us, but three shells in the horse-shoe on his chest rolled him over, a black inanimate mass. Wo youngsters were immensely pleased, and even A. condescended to say that this was better managed than the morning's work. The

bear having been measured (he was six feet four inches from the nose to the tail), and then skinned, we returned in triumph to our tents, where a welcome dinner awaited us, after which, more cheroots, and a yarn or two from A., and then to bed.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER VII.—THE WET BLANKET.

It is often objected to the good characters in works of fiction, that they are not made sufficiently 'interesting,' and that the cause of morality thereby suffers; and yet, after all, the novelist is in this particular only drawing from life itself. It was a complaint made by a great religious leader, in connection with the question of psalm-singing, that 'the devil had all the best tunes;' and in spite of some isolated efforts to prevent him, the devil still possesses them. The graces of good manners, of wit, and above all, of 'naturalness,' are almost always conspicuous by their absence in those who call themselves religious persons. Their 'cheerfulness'—though we all agree it is highly commendable—is not attractive, since it often partakes of that character which is termed by the frivolous 'deadly lively.' It is not so easy to be all things to all men, as an apostle might wish, and the attempt of the virtuous to win over the wicked by geniality, is almost always a failure. Like the well-meant efforts of men of science to gild the pill of instruction, they fail even in the gilding. The orrery by which we are to be attracted towards the heavenly bodies, is itself a melancholy object, and only amusing from the fact that it aspires to be so. So much is this the case, that a clergyman who happens to have a natural turn for humour is generally looked on with some suspicion by his own cloth, and it is whispered: 'It is a pity he took orders.' And what is true in this respect of persons of earnest religious feeling, is still more so in the case of those of a rigid morality. They are not only unattractive to their fellow-creatures, but often even intolerable; which does not so much arise from their being virtuous, while the rest of the world like cakes and ale, as from their want of sympathy, their reserve, and from those characteristics the possessor of which is apt to be described in brief as 'a wet blanket.'

'The Wet Blanket' was the name by which John Milbank was known in social circles at Hilton, as though he had been an Indian chief. He was undeniably handsome, and personal beauty is itself a powerful social auxiliary even in a man; 'a good-looking fellow' has, in spite of Wilkes's saying, more than a quarter of an hour's start of an ugly one, even with those of his own sex. But this advantage was thrown away in John's case, by the absence of the desire to please. In women, indeed, he excited a temporary interest; but when they found he was marble, it soon died away, or crystallised into the sort of admiration with which one regards a statue. It could not be said of him that 'he taught in the Sunday school, and had not a vice,' because he did not teach in the Sunday school. The religious sect to which, in common with his late uncle, he belonged was proud of him, by reason of his growing importance, rather than from any gracious sign of piety in the young man: he would one day become a powerful member of

their church, since diligence, sobriety, and intelligence unfailingly lead to power; but they did not expect from him an enthusiastic support. He attended their prayer-meetings pretty regularly, but by no means so often as he might have done; and now and then he had a tendency to 'withstand the word'—that is, as Mr Linch preached it. In morals, too, he was not so much austere, which would have been creditable, as apparently unmoved by temptation; a circumstance which, by the fair sex, was naturally felt to be insulting. Even in the most respectable circles, it may be remarked, that a man who 'doesn't care for ladies' society,' or is not 'impressonable,' is held in more disfavour than a rake. John Milbank was not a saint, in short, but quite as unpopular as though he had been one. On the other hand, he had some fine qualities of a positive and active sort. He was as just as Aristides, and yet generous to a fault. For all his 'getting,' he never refused to give. His hand, as more and more was poured into it, remained open as ever, not only to the necessities of the poor, but even to more doubtful claimants. He had more than once assisted his brother with money to defray his extravagances; toiled and tasked himself for months to procure funds for him, that had been wasted in a day. This, indeed, had not happened very lately, for the breach had been so wide between them, that Richard had not had the front of brass to apply to him for assistance; but, as we have seen, John made a generous effort to secure to his brother the half of that wealth, which would else, as he had good reason to suppose, have accrued to himself alone; nor could anything have proved more incontestably the confidence which his uncle had reposed in his generosity of disposition, than the hint which he had given him of the contents of his testament. Even now, notwithstanding the ungraciousness with which his kindly warning had been received, he did not regret it, nor would he have done so, even if, through it alone, his brother had saved his inheritance. His sense of duty overbore all other considerations; and only less strong than that was his sense of the obligations of kinship. He could not love his brother; the text that assumes the knowledge of that relative as a reason for loving him, had no application in the case; for it was his very acquaintance with Richard's character that prevented him from entertaining affection for him; but he thought himself bound to defend and advance his interests for all that, even to his own hurt—save in one particular. He could not, and he would not, assist him to marry Maggie Thorne.

If you had opened John Milbank's heart, you would have found her name engraved on that true metal, more deeply than her father had ever cut into steel. No one had read it there, as he had flattered himself, until an hour ago, when Richard had taunted him with that fatal secret. He had never told his love, nor thought of telling it; it would have been of no use to do so, it was true, since Richard, his superior in every way in the eyes of womankind, had declared his intentions of winning Maggie; but still it was for Richard's sake that he had never so much as sighed for her; had buried her, as it were, in his heart, and sorrowed for her loss, as though—almost—she had been really dead to him. It was that 'almost' which had of late become the fiery trial of John Milbank's life.

There had been a temptation to him far beyond that of wealth—to keep the knowledge of his uncle's will from Richard, so that his marriage with Maggie should have been rendered impossible, through lack of means. He had put that from him, like a man—for few women in such a case would have exercised a similar self-denial—and had been in some degree rewarded for it. The marriage which poverty might, after all, have hastened in one so reckless as his brother, had been at least postponed. It afforded John no actual hope, indeed, but it was a reprieve from what would have been despair. On the other hand, Richard had discovered that he was his rival, and thereby possessed himself of a weapon against which he had no defence, and the wounds of which were terrible; and he had already shewn that he would not spare to use it.

Gloomy as was the prospect of the next twelve months for John, it was not that which now weighed upon his mind, as he sat alone at quiet Rosebank—soon to be the scene of unwelcome revelry and riot. Discomfort and insolence he would have to bear, no doubt; but it was not of himself that he was thinking, nor of the ordeal through which he was about to pass. He looked beyond that time, and shuddered at the fate that was awaiting Maggie. The heartless selfishness and brutal vice of Richard Milbank were revealed to him as they had never been before, and it was Maggie who would be their helpless victim. He did not believe that any conduct of this man, in the meantime, however gross, would alienate her affections from him, though he could not refrain from speculating upon the possibility of such an occurrence. Richard had bewitched her from the first, and had retained her love without an effort on his part; nay, notwithstanding that he had been remiss in his attentions to her, and notoriously given up to vice and folly. He had been faithless to her, too, John knew, though Maggie probably did not, and that reflection was accompanied by another. Should he let her know it? It would be a base thing to do, in one sense; but if nothing short of having her eyes opened to the depravity of this man, could save her from lifelong wretchedness, would it not be justifiable? Perhaps. Yet if he, John, were to be the cause of her enlightenment, would it be to save her from Richard, or to recommend to her himself? A question not to be satisfactorily answered; and, moreover, he could never recommend himself to her that way. No; nor, as it seemed, in any way. Maggie had never liked him—had never spoken a really pleasant word to him until that afternoon, and then it had only been to thank him for his generosity to Richard. It had been delicious to him to see her smile, to hear her gracious words, to take her little hand, and feel it press his own; but it had also been wormwood; for did not her very gratitude imply that she and Richard were already one, or as good as one! No; if Richard were dead, he should be no nearer to possessing her, since she had evidently an antipathy to him. (He was wrong here; Maggie had no antipathy to him, though little sympathy with his character—which she nevertheless secretly respected and admired; but she resented his virtues, the possession of which, seemed a reproach to his brother, and especially the praise of them by others.) How cruel and unjust it seemed! All his

heart was hers; all his thoughts were for her. To work for her, would have been the greatest bliss his imagination could conceive. Yet all this devotion weighed as nothing against a few passionate glances from Richard's eyes, a few careless vows from Richard's lips.

What was it that his brother possessed, and he did not, which, notwithstanding the former's follies, made him everywhere the favourite with all women, and with nine-tenths of their male acquaintance, including even so business-loving and sedate a personage as had been their uncle Matthew? Poor John even went the length of looking at himself in the little pier-glass, as though some explanation of the phenomenon might be discovered there. And, indeed, in the rueful countenance which now confronted him—so seldom regarded by himself that it was quite a novel study—he did seem to recognise some of his social defects. It was not, he owned, as a young man's face should be; there were lines about it that looked like the autograph of Time itself; the forehead was not smooth; and the muscles about the mouth were hard and set, not mobile, as in those who are given to smile. 'She thinks me a dull dog, no doubt,' sighed he; 'well, at least she shall have no cause to call me a surly one.'

Did all his bitterness, and murmuring against the hardness of his fate, result, then, but in resignation? Did he intend to submit patiently to all indignities that might be put upon him, well content if he should secure an acknowledgment of his forbearance from Maggie's lips? Or did he entertain a hope that before the year was out, something might happen yet, to reward him for years of silent but supreme devotion; that her love for Richard might wane through his own reckless ill-doing; and that her pity for himself might grow to love, or at least to the toleration which he was willing to accept in its stead? It is a question that at present cannot be answered, since, if he had that day been asked it, John Milbank could not have answered it himself.

CHAPTER VIII.—FORGIVEN.

Though not usually what is called 'a man of his word,' Richard Milbank kept it as respected his proceedings at Rosebank to the letter. He assembled there the jovial spirits of whom he had spoken to John so eulogistically, and shewed him 'life,' in what he well knew would prove to be a very unattractive form. Why, of all his disolute companions, Dennis Blake was especially obnoxious to his brother; he only knew that he *was* so, and asked him all the more frequently to Rosebank on that account. Often and often, when John came back to what was now his home, he found a quiet little company sitting immersed in cards, and the table covered with gold and notes, as though it had been that of a money-changer. If it was a spectacle, as Mrs Morden said it was, to 'make the old master turn in his grave,' he must have made a good many such revolutions.

John himself was not, as may be imagined, received by these gentry with enthusiasm; indeed, they were much too occupied with their gains and losses to pay much attention to his arrival; but, either to shew that he had a right to be there, or in order to obey the letter of his uncle's will (since

to comply with its spirit was out of the question), he seldom let a day pass without giving his brother the opportunity of speech with him. At first, he had even dined in his company, accommodating his own early hours to suit Richard's more fashionable habits; but as there were always guests at table whose presence was more or less unwelcome to him, and some of whom did not hesitate to shew that they reciprocated this want of sympathy, he had discontinued the custom. He would come home late—or what was late for him—and after looking in upon the card-party for a few minutes, would retire to his chamber—not always, however, to rest; for, though the company were sedate and serious enough before supper, they were wont after that meal to grow so uproarious, that the deaf old house-keeper would awake from slumber with the utterly false impression that she was in Little Bethel Chapel, and that Mr Lynch had just given out the hymn. It was complained by some members of the *Sans Souci* that there was now quite a difficulty in getting up a rubber there, since all the choicer spirits—which meant those most devoted to high play—were drawn away from it by the superior attractions of Rosebank. Nor, it was whispered, was it only whist that was played there, but unhallowed games such as loo, and even brag. 'And mark my words,' said Colonel Hardhead, who had made a sort of professional income out of the more scientific amusement of about three hundred pounds for the last twenty years—'there will be a row at that man Milbank's. No young fellow can hurt himself, to speak of, at short whist,' this military moralist went on to say; 'but when it comes to gambling games, there is no telling what he mayn't lose.' Nor was gambling, unhappily, the only vice that was now practised in what Miss Lynch, the lawyer's sister—an ancient, but still very marriageable maiden, who had paid delicate attentions, indeed so delicate that he had never so much as observed them, to Mr Matthew Thurlie for the last quarter of a century—had been wont poetically to term 'the Rose Bower.' The '20 port,' the long untouch'd bin of brown sherry, were, to use their new proprietor's own phrase, 'punished' very severely; and people who inflict that sort of chastisement—like a loving father who corrects his child—often suffer for it in their own persons. Drink had always been one of Richard's weaknesses, and now that he could indulge it without stint, it was gaining the mastery over him with rapid strides. He drank when he was winning, for very joy; he drank when he was losing, to keep up his spirits; and when he was neither winning nor losing, which was about half his time, he drank, because he felt the need of a stimulant. The only approach to regularity and system which his character exhibited, was in keeping his 'cellar-book' in a most methodical manner, and entering in it every bottle that was withdrawn from that fast-failing treasure-cave. In the middle of a debauch, he would leave his companions, and, with some social platitude about 'every man being his own butler,' would stagger down to the bins, and bring up more wine himself, and set it down in his book 'before he forgot it.'

'You keep that book, I suppose, by "double entry,"' Dick, said Mr Roberts on an occasion when this young Apollo was looking more than usual like Silenus.

Nor was it only in the presence of his boon

companions that Richard thus disgraced himself. As time went on—the time in which he called himself ‘his own master,’ but which was making him more and more a slave—indulgence in this respect had grown so much a habit with him, that he could not shake it off even when he would have done so. And on one occasion, when, for once, a joint invitation from the two brothers had brought Mr Linch and his sister, with Mr Thorne and Maggie, to dine at Rosebank, Richard’s behaviour at his own table was what even simple Miss Linch could not forbear to hint at to Maggie in the drawing-room as ‘very peculiar.’ What Maggie thought of it, was not stated; but what the gentlemen guests thought of it may be gathered from the fact, that they took the two ladies home without giving them the opportunity of making a cup of tea—which might have done him good—for the master of the house. The person who suffered most upon that painful occasion was John Milbank, because he most clearly understood what Maggie was suffering, and was absolutely unable, from the nature of the case, to conceal that he did so. If he had had time to consider the affair, perhaps he might have found cause for selfish congratulation; but in the meantime, he was too much pained to enter into such reflections, and besides, was fully occupied by his attempts to smooth matters.

When Herbert Thorne and his daughter got home that night, the former made one more effort—the first since Richard had come into his property, nine months ago—to remonstrate with Maggie upon her engagement.

‘You see, what I told you would happen, has come to pass,’ Maggie, observed he bluntly: ‘Richard Milbank has become a sot.’

‘Father, this is your house,’ answered the girl, at the same time rising from her chair, ‘and you have, of course, the right to say in it what you please; but I will not stay here if you speak such words of Richard.’

She spoke in desperate earnest, and even moved towards the shawl and bonnet, which she had just laid aside upon the table. It was evidently no use to *drive* her from the path that she had chosen. That would only hurry her over the precipice round which it ran.

‘I do not wish to use hard words, Maggie, and certainly not words to pain you; but what is to be thought of Richard Milbank’s behaviour to you, to me, to all of us, at his own table to-day? Is it possible that you could not see he was intoxicated?’

‘I did see that!’ She had seen it long before the old man had done so; the sense of it had reached her heart, and chilled it, alas! without numbing it to pain, before the suspicion of it had dawned in her father’s brain. ‘It was shocking, and most sad; but then he knows that you look unfavourably upon him, and that Mr Linch is not his friend; and that puts him ill at ease. I think he took the wine in order to give him vivacity. I don’t defend him, but I think there was some excuse. I am sure his brother thought that, by the way he took it.’

‘John is his good angel, of course, if only Richard would let him be so; but he will not. His example and advice are utterly thrown away upon him. He strove to enrich him at his own expense, and the return which he has got for it is, that this fellow has already half-ruined him.’

‘Half-ruined John? How can that be?’

‘First, by borrowing money of him, which he has not repaid, and never can repay; then, by drawing out every shilling he can lay his hands upon from the business, so that it is almost crippled. Of course, you did not know this, nor should I have done so, if I had waited for John to tell me. He is one of those who never complain. But it is none the less true, for all that. I doubt, Maggie, whether Richard Milbank is any the better off at this moment, if everything was to be made square, than before his uncle’s death.’

‘He is no worse off, at all events, father, than when I promised to marry him,’ was the quiet reply.

‘Worse off! As to money, perhaps not. But is he no worse?’ Maggie, darling, look into your heart, and tell me truthfully, have you any genuine confidence in this man? Do you think that though the patience and long-suffering of his brother have been utterly thrown away upon him, that you may yet win him from ruin, as his wife? Is there any reasonable expectation of it? Nay, is there even hope?’

Maggie answered not a word, nor even looked up at her father, but sat with her fingers plucking at a little bouquet of roses, which Richard had gathered her from the garden, before they had sat down to table.

‘You know, my girl, that I am but speaking the bare truth when I say that the gulf of ruin gapes for you, and that the branch by which you trust to save yourself from it, though green and pleasant to the eye, is rotten and worthless. Are you bewitched by this handsome scoundrel? Has he fascinated you, as the snake fascinates the poor innocent bird, merely with his bright eyes? If you were not my daughter, I should say that the father of such a girl must needs be ashamed of her.’

Into her pale cheeks there stole a scarlet flush, as though one of the rose petals she was stripping from their stem, and strewing on the ground, had settled there; but her voice was very quiet as she replied: ‘Speak of me, as you please, father, and whatever you speak of me, I will not even say that I have not deserved it. Perhaps I *am* bewitched. I have nothing to answer in Richard’s defence nor in my own, except three words: I love him.’

‘You are easily satisfied, Maggie. If your mother had given the same reason for choosing me for a husband, she would at least have added: “And he loves me.”’

‘Richard *does* love me, father,’ answered Maggie vehemently. ‘If you were to paint him ever so darkly, and then convince me that the portrait was a correct one, I should still be sure of that.’

‘Then love is not what love was in my time, lass,’ sighed the old man, with the air of one who is weary of contention. ‘Why, the man never comes to see you; or, at least, I could count on my fingers the times that he has been here since his uncle left him his co-heir. He must be sure of you indeed, Maggie, since he takes such little pains to keep what he has so lightly won.’

Nothing more that night was spoken between the father and daughter upon the matter; for, indeed, each had said all they had to say; but as sometimes happens in arguments, the arrow that had been shot with the least care had gone highest home. The Parthian shaft which the engraver had let fly at a venture, when all seemed over, and

he was indeed in full retreat, had almost turned the fortune of the battle. Maggie could have resisted anything in the way of depreciation of her lover, simply by intrinching herself behind the rampart of unbelief, but the suggestion that Richard was neglecting her was insupportable, since she had her own suspicions that it was true.

The very next morning, however, as it happened, Richard made his appearance at the engraver's house, not to excuse his conduct of the previous evening, nor even to extenuate it, he said, but to throw himself—as he confessed he had often done before—on his darling's mercy; a course of conduct which not only reinstated him in her good graces, but probably placed him higher therein than he would have been had he never fallen. He spent the whole morning in her company—not without stealing a furtive look or two at his watch, however—and seemed to take a greater interest in her occupations and pursuits than he had ever done before. As to the state of his affairs, concerning which she put some straightforward questions—without, however, any tincture of reproach—he told her very frankly that they were far from flourishing, and that, when the year was out, he might again propose to her to share his fortunes across the Atlantic.

'You once spoke to me of "a fresh start," Maggie, in a new country,' said he, with a penitent sigh, 'and I have often wished that fortune—though it seemed to be good fortune—had not interfered to prevent my trying it. I doubt we shall have to try it, after all.'

'So much the better, darling,' answered she resolutely. 'Removed from these terrible temptations, which in your wiser moments you regret so much, you will then be a happier man. You smile, Richard, but it is not with your old smile! O surely, surely, you will not regret them!'

'I was not thinking of them at all, Maggie,' whispered the young fellow; 'I was only regretting the time lost which we might have spent together, since I might have called you mine six months ago.'

Richard Milbank may have been dull at figures; but for skill in getting his somewhat crooked accounts passed by an auditors in the High Court of Love, he had few superiors.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

SIR WILLIAM THOMSON, who is well known among the most eminent of the natural philosophers of Europe, has been elected President of the Society of Telegraph Engineers under promising circumstances, for in two years the number of members of that Society has increased from one hundred and ten to five hundred. Sir William delivered an address, in which, after pointing out the great benefits that would accrue to dwellers in houses if architecture were regarded as a branch of engineering, he gave an account of the 'reflected benefits which electrical science gains from its practical application in the electric telegraph.' Magnetic force, electric resistance, electro-motive force, and other numerical quantities, are no longer mere terms, but can be accurately defined and measured. Such achievements as this indicate great capabilities, and imply a grand future. Already practical telegraphy may promote cosmical science.

Physicists believe there is some relation between terrestrial electricity and appearances of the aurora, and if the operators at each end of a telegraph line would only observe an electrometer there fixed at every convenient opportunity, and wherever telegraphic lines extend, they would collect information of the highest value. 'We may hope,' said Sir W. Thomson in conclusion, 'that besides definite information regarding atmospheric electricity, in which we are at present so very deficient, we shall also get towards that great mystery of nature—the explanation of terrestrial magnetism and its associated phenomena of the grand secular variation of magnetism, magnetic storms, and the aurora borealis.'

The publication of daily weather charts for the world was commenced on the first day of the present year; and thus the proposition made by the United States' representative at the Meteorological Congress held last autumn in Vienna, has become a fact. The time fixed on for the simultaneous observation is a quarter to 1 p.m. Greenwich Mean Time, which, for Europe, Africa, and greater part of Asia, secures the advantage of daylight, while in America the work will have to be done in the night or early morning. The telegraphic area of the States now includes Pike's Peak, one of the summits of the Rocky Mountains, within the state of Colorado. A wire connects it with the general meteorological system of telegraphs, and the height being eleven thousand feet, interesting observations may be looked for. We hope it is true that a 'comfortable house' has been built for the observer. Any one wishing to help in this great undertaking, should apply for information to the Director of the Meteorological Office, 116 Victoria Street, London.

Another comprehensive scheme—a monthly climatological summary for the British empire, is to be published by a contemporary journal—*The Colonies*. Particulars of temperature, of moisture, of sunshine and shade, of rain and cloud, are to be given from a score of places, ranging from London to Calcutta, from Singapore to Sydney, from Wellington N.Z. to the West Indies, and from the Cape of Good Hope to Canada. Such endeavours as these, so wide in their scope, can hardly fail to widen the basis of meteorology, and furnish data for scientific conclusions.

The Meteorological Office has published a blue-book 'On the Form of Cyclones in the Southern Indian Ocean,' by Mr Meldrum of the Observatory, Mauritius, which ought to be studied with attention by mariners, for Mr Meldrum by long observation has come to the conclusion, that the storms commonly described as cyclones are not invariably circular in form. He shews, on the contrary, that their general form is a spiral, produced by the conflict of two opposing winds. This is an important fact; the more so, because the rules given for steering away from the destructive centre of a circular storm are of no use to a ship caught in a spiral storm. The right course in the one case, would be the wrong in the other. The people who go down to the sea in ships will, therefore, do well to get the work above mentioned, which costs but sixpence, and read it for themselves.

In this we have an example that knowledge of the weather in any part of the world may be useful all over it. The more observations are multiplied—provided they be trustworthy—

the better for all concerned. The *Journal* of the Scottish Meteorological Society informs us, in Notes on West India Cyclones, that these destructive whirlstorms are formed in the Atlantic a little to the north of the equator, and move first to the westward, constrained, as may be believed, by the general westerly atmospheric current. But on nearing the land, they are diverted by other currents, or by inequalities of the surface. As regards their rotation, the most probable explanation is this: 'If a long glass cylinder is immersed a little way into a body of water, and the air is suddenly exhausted or rarefied by drawing it out at the top of the cylinder, the water rises, and in rising, rotates. This has been distinctly seen to be the case in waterspouts, dust-storms, and whirlwinds. There are currents of air in these columns, which are seen to be rising up and rotating at the same time.' From this we learn how it came to pass that sea-water was found after the passage of a cyclone at a height of two thousand five hundred feet on the small island of Saba, one of the West India group.

A balloon of novel design is now constructing in Philadelphia, with a view to attempt a voyage through the air to Europe. If successful, regular series of observations might be made, which would throw light on the meteorological phenomena that prevail over the great oceans.

We all know that the functionaries at the Weather Office in London can predict the approach of storms with a fair amount of accuracy; if they could, in like manner, foretell a fall of temperature, their services to meteorological science, and to horticultural and agricultural practice, would be incalculable. This point was treated of by Professor Thimelton Dyer, in an address delivered some time ago at Birmingham. Careful observation has shewn that, in the course of forty-four years, there were eighty periods of cold, of about two weeks each. If these could be foreseen, how readily would gardeners seek for means of protection! Professor Dyer remarks: 'The precise mode in which plants are affected by cold is hardly completely known. In many cases, no doubt, the vital properties of the protoplasm contained within the cells receive an injury from the direct effect of low temperature from which there is no recovery. In other instances, death is not the inevitable result even from freezing, if thawing be gradually effected. Some curious experiments appear to shew that cold below the freezing-point, like the temperature of boiling water or the electric discharge, produces an alteration in the cell-walls, which renders them more pervious to fluids, and, therefore, no longer capable of retaining their cell-contents.'

Science apart, these remarks suggest the conclusion, that if any one will invent a cheap and expeditious way of protecting small trees and shrubs from frost, he may expect a handsome profit even before the meteorologists are ready with their cold-warnings.

A question brought before the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester by Professor Osborne Reynolds will perhaps rescue an important fact from the region of forgetfulness. It is the explosiveness of water. If water could only be got to explode, it would be far more powerful than gunpowder; but that is the difficulty, for the water, instead of exploding, flies away in steam.

Professor Piazzi Smyth writing on the subject states that he has tried to explode water by pushing a drop into melted lead; but the drop could by no means be persuaded to go below the surface. But 'when he took a small iron ladle, put a drop of water on the bottom of it, and gave therewith a little pat to the surface of the melted lead, instantly the whole contents of the great ladle were scattered to the winds, and only a few grains were recovered. Explosion of water had apparently taken place with excellent effect.'

Here is a problem for some enterprising mechanic. A machine to explode water drop by drop would economise all the heat of the coal, and have great power. It is on record that certain large copper-works were blown up by one of the workmen spitting into a ladle of molten copper. In that case the fluid exploded, instead of passing off in steam.

In a communication to the same Society, Mr Winstanley makes known results of observations which help to explain the phenomena seen in the western sky during sunset. Former observers had noticed that the last glimpse of the sun appears bluish-green in colour; and this is confirmed by Mr Winstanley, who states that to the naked eye its appearance has generally been that of a green spark of large size and great intensity, very similar to one of the effects seen when the sun shines upon a well-cut diamond. But there are variations in the colour, and in duration of visibility: the latter from half a second to two seconds and a half. The edge of a cloud, or an artificial horizon, is as suitable for the observation as the natural horizon, and the conclusion from the whole series of observations is, that the colours are produced by the prismatic action of the atmosphere. The same effect is seen in observing the light of the moon; and as regards starlight, Mr Winstanley says: 'The rapid changes in colour observable in the case of almost any large fixed star at an elevation of twenty or thirty degrees above the horizon, the changes varying among red, green, and blue, may be fairly attributable to the same cause as the colour in the sun's final ray. Particles of dust floating in the air act for the moment as an horizon, and thus enable the eye to perceive, even in the light of the stars, the prismatic action of our atmosphere.'

In the work of this busy world, rollers play a very important part: they spread the dough for pastry, they level and harden roads, they make paper, and they turn out railway bars and armour-plates of the most ponderous dimensions. And now we hear of a further achievement—rollers are employed to manufacture screws, as may be seen at the works of C. Fairbairn and Company, Gateshead. It would perhaps be a better definition to say that *rolling* is employed, for the screws are produced by grooved plates, between which they are rolled backwards and forwards. Screws of any size can thus be made from three-eighth inch in thickness to three inches, or larger, and with a square, angular, or round thread, as may be desired. The fibre of the iron follows the twist of the thread, whereby the strength of the screw is increased. Screws one foot long and three inches thick can be made at the rate of sixty an hour, which is fifty-eight more than could be made in the ordinary way. Of the one-and-a-half inch and the three-eighth inch sizes, from two hundred and fifty to six hundred can be turned out in an hour;

and, as we are informed, the machine which accomplishes all this 'can be worked by two lads.' The fashioning of the heads is a separate process.

Experiments made in Berlin to purify sewage by chemical means have failed, as in other places; and it is found that the best way to utilise the drainage is in the irrigation of sandy land. There is any quantity of sandy land round the Prussian capital, on which, by the means suggested, good crops of grass, maize, and 'mangold' may be produced, and the land itself permanently improved in quality. We learn, too, that the sewage-water becomes 'very pure' by flowing across the land amid the growing crops.

A useful preparation, described as 'parchment solution,' has been made known in foreign chemical journals: gutta-percha is softened and reduced to a liquid form in ether, and can then be used as a varnish or coating for pictures, engravings, cards, and so forth—or for fixing charcoal and chalk drawings. The method to be followed in the latter case is, to distribute the solution over the surface in the form of fine spray. The ether evaporates, and leaves the gutta-percha as a very thin but fast coating to protect the drawing. There are many delicate textures and surfaces to which this solution could be applied with advantage; for a light shower of spray may be made to fall where a brush would be too heavy.

Another item is, that if a concentrated solution of bichromate of potassa be added to gum, glue, or gelatine, these become impervious to water; and can be used as waterproof glue, and for other purposes. In Germany, paper soaked in the preparation is largely used to wrap up articles of food from which it is important to exclude the air.

In the last volume of Proceedings of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Liverpool, an account is given of a recent exploration of the land of Moab. The party were at Sebbah—the ancient Masada—on the brow of a great cliff, and found it easy to hold a conversation with some of their companions who had remained in the valley half a mile below. This remarkable instance of hearing through a long distance pairs well with a remarkable case of seeing. The same party being at Kerak, on the high table-land of Moab, could see Jerusalem distinctly with the naked eye, though distant fifty miles; and, with a telescope, they clearly 'made out the prominent buildings, such as the Mosque of Omar, Tower of Hippicus, as well as the buildings on the Mount of Olives.' These two instances furnish striking evidence of the clearness of the atmosphere in the Holy Land.

In the region of Mount Sinai, manna which drops from trees is eaten by the monks and the Arabs. Manna of the same kind has been found in Europe. At Liebfrauenberg in the Vosges, during hot summer weather, a lime-tree was observed covered with honey-dew, which after a few hours' exposure ceased to be sticky, and a quantity was collected for examination. On analysis it yielded two kinds of sugar and dextrine, in the same proportions as the Arabian manna above mentioned; and it was estimated that the quantity on the lime-tree would weigh, when dry, from four to seven pounds. Further particulars of this subject may be found in the *Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society*.

In the province of Constantine, Algeria, are depressions of the desert soil below the level of the

sea. It has been proposed to cut a canal from the Mediterranean, about thirty miles distant, to fill these depressions with water, and thereby reclaim, if possible, the surrounding waste.

Education appears to be making good progress in our 'Dominion' beyond the sea, for King's College, Windsor, Nova Scotia, near Halifax, now announces that it has all that is required—whether teachers or instruments—for training young men to be civil engineers or chemists, in addition to the usual courses of study. Self-reliance in education will be found as likely to prosper as self-reliance in politics, especially when, as the College Calendar informs us, 'the instruction in practical chemistry is given on the system which made the reputation of the famous Giessen Laboratory.' It will be a proud day for Canada when she can produce Davys, and Faradays, and Stephenson for herself.

A RAMBLE ON THE ALMOND.

THE late Dr R. Chambers, from whose Scrap-book we have made numerous quotations, left the following notes of a ramble on the Almond, in July 1850, bearing on old ballad history.

Visited Logie Almond and Lynedoch, in Perthshire—the river Almond being a tributary of the Tay. Logie Almond is a large quadrangular house, picturesquely situated, but out of order and falling to ruin. It must have been a grand place long ago. It is melancholy to go through this disfigured house, and see desolation and partial ruin reigning where lately a large family establishment existed. The windows are getting broken, the paper beginning to flap from the walls; cornices are dishevelled; masses of broken-down plaster and masonry lie on the floors. One female servant dwells in a room on the ground-floor to take care of the mansion. She points out the rooms which were occupied by members of the family. The whole are in the last degree forlorn, melancholy, and affecting. Some years ago, the estate was purchased by the Earl of Mansfield for £203,000.

The Drummonds of Logie Almond, a branch of the noble family of Perth, were zealous Jacobites, but contrived, somehow, never to lose their estate for their principles. The laird at the early part of the last century, a man of heroic strength and bravery, fought valiantly at Sheriffmuir, where he killed many of the enemy with his own hand. He was taken prisoner. There is shewn in the house a concealed chamber, which was used for the protection of persons obnoxious to the government. Not improbably, as the family was a Catholic one, it might be originally designed for the concealment of priests, at a time when such persons were treated in Britain as felons. This curious concealed apartment is near an angle of the oldest part of the house. In the first place, you enter a room, which, from some arrangements still preserved, appears to have been used as an armoury, and to have been hung with tapestry. In a corner, there is a plain door flush with the wall, and which the tapestry would cover. This gives access to a smaller room, or closet, having a low ceiling, and one little window. A stranger, who, having discovered the aforesaid door, had entered this room, would have seen probably a few articles of attire hanging round the walls, and nothing else but an upright case of shelving containing crockery and glasses. He would scarcely, without some special hint on the

subject, have surmised that this case was fitted into a narrow door, opening to a small spiral stair, at the top of which, right over the ceiling of the room below, was a small space sufficient to contain a bed for two persons, but only about four feet high, and without any observable communication with the outer air. Thus, it will be observed, a person requiring concealment might in general live in the armoury; if the house were subjected to a search, he might retire to the bed-like concealment above the closet. It is the tradition of the house, that James Duke of Perth was concealed here about the time of the rebellion of 1745, in which he was concerned. He fortunately made his escape.

The next estate to the northward is Lednock, or Lynedoch, formerly the property of Lord Lynedoch, but now also belonging to the Earl of Mansfield. Country here well wooded and beautiful. The house or cottage in which Lord Lynedoch lived is a cluster of small buildings on the edge of the glen. One can scarcely believe that this nobleman should ever have been able to receive fine company in such a place; yet the fact is that he used to have great numbers of exceedingly fine people at the cottage; and for effect, he would have beautiful and costly plants and flowers sent down from London in pots.

The braes of Lednock are rendered classic ground by the muse-mournd story of Bessie Bell and Mary Gray. Who is not acquainted with the charming lyric, of which the first stanza is old; the rest written by Ramsay:

O, Bessie Bell and Mary Gray,
They were twa bonnie lasses;
They bigg'd a bower on yon burn brae,
And cheek'd it ower wi' rashes.
Fair Bessie Bell, I lo'ed yestreen,
And thoct I ne'er could alter,
But Mary Gray's twa pawky een
Gard a' my fancy falter.

The usual tradition is, that Mary Gray was the daughter of the Laird of Lednock, while her friend Bessie Bell stood in the same relation to the Laird of Kinraid, a neighbouring estate. On the plague of 1665 breaking out—the great plague which desolated London, and extended over England and Scotland—these two mutually attached young women retired to a small bower which they built on the brae about three-quarters of a mile up the river from Lednock. A young man, the lover of one or both—the hero of the lyric—visiting them with provisions, communicated the infection, and they perished. The story goes on to say, that their bodies were carried to be interred in Methven kirkyard, when the people of that parish met the mournful procession at the Drouach ford, and opposed its passage across the river, under an apprehension of infection being communicated to their hitherto uncontaminated district. In these circumstances, the funeral company had no alternative but to bury the two maidens in the haugh near the ford. There, accordingly, is their grave to this day, distinguished as well as protected by a small railed inclosure which was erected by Lord Lynedoch. Some remains of their bower are also to be seen in the wood. [In the small note-book whence this is extracted, R. C. writes the following lines in pencil.]

By Almond water running deep
Two beauteous maidens soundly sleep—

Sleep soundly in their narrow bed,
Without a stone to mark their head;
Who living wandered side by side,
Whom dying, death did not divide:
Oh, who can e'er forget the lay
Of Bessie Bell and Mary Gray.

A CLAIMANT FOR ROYALTY.

THE last eighteen months of the life of the son of Louis XVI. were passed in deep obscurity, and the mystery in which his death and burial were involved, gave to the general sympathy that his fate naturally excited a romantic interest. No better evidence can be given of the extent of this feeling than the numerous pretenders who have successively appeared to claim identity with him. Few facts in history have been better established than the death of this young prince in the Temple, in June 1795; yet for at least forty years afterwards there were always to be found persons ready to believe in, and eager to support, the most slenderly supported contradiction of that event.

A traveller in France in the year 1835 tells us that every petty tumult there generates a new claimant for the honours of the blood-royal. A new dauphin, says he, was started at the fair of Angers but a month ago. This is the great mart festivity of the west, and forms the chief fund of conversation for the year to come. In short, nothing could be fitter than this fair for the publication of a new quack medicine, a new government, or a new dauphin. This prince, as it appeared, shewed himself with the due proportion of mystery, was visible only from time to time, and had a favoured few, chiefly large proprietors, to whom he shewed his favour by especially desiring cheques on their bankers. He made, however, one fatal mistake. The son of Louis XVI. would have been at that time between forty and fifty years of age; but his pretended representative is described as a handsome rogue between twenty-five and thirty. So, in spite of positive assertions to the effect that he had been recognised by the court of St James's, and had been promised the Princess Victoria in marriage, that imposture was quickly exposed. But it is not with the merits or demerits of this case with which we are about to concern ourselves. Some twelve years earlier the newspapers were interesting their readers with the story of a person whose claims were no doubt equally ill-founded, but to whom a singular life and melancholy death lent an interest unattainable by any vulgar impostor.

In the spring of 1819 an Italian gentleman, who had left his residence in the country to spend a little time at Modena, the capital of the state of which he was a subject, paid a visit one evening to the theatre there. He took his seat behind a gentleman of most prepossessing appearance, who was taking a lively interest in the comedy, though evidently not an Italian. They soon fell into conversation. The stranger not only spoke excellent Tuscan or pure Italian, but talked with the greatest facility in the *patois* or peculiar dialect of the place. Signor Candia was in time given to understand that his acquaintance was a Frenchman; so they conversed for some time in French. The manners and conversation of the stranger were those not only of a refined gentleman, but of an accomplished scholar.

Signor Candia was so struck with all this, that at the end of the performance he followed the stranger out of the theatre, and as it had come on to rain heavily, offered him the shelter of his umbrella, which the Frenchman accepted. Their roads lay in different directions, but the Signor politely insisted on seeing him to his own door, which he did; and, on parting, named the hotel in which he was staying to the stranger, who thereon said that he knew it well, and had lived there himself.

The Italian, full of the meeting of the evening, on reaching his own hotel, asked the people of the house what they knew of such a person as he described, who had been their guest. Their answer was mysterious and somewhat hesitating. They knew little of the gentleman, except that he had come from Corsica a little while before; that his name was De Bourlon; but they hinted that he must be a person of consideration, as he had been seen in familiar conversation with some of the greatest personages in Modena, and was allowed the use of one of the governor's carriages.

The next morning the stranger called to thank Signor Candia for his civility. Soon by daylight, and without his hat, his most striking likeness to the Bourbon family instantly struck the Italian. After conversing together they went out for a walk. In the principal street of Modena they met the military governor, who bowed to the Frenchman in a most respectful manner. On the bastions they saw the Grand Duke of Modena himself, who saluted the stranger as sovereigns salute persons of the very highest rank, and went aside with him for several minutes' conversation.

On parting from his mysterious companion, Signor Candia went to the chief magistrate of the city, and asked him, as an old and confidential friend, to tell him what he knew about the stranger. The magistrate knew, or pretended to know, little enough, but he hinted that it would be as well if Signor Candia shunned the Frenchman.

In spite of this, however, the signor's curiosity and positive admiration of the stranger's talents, conversation, and manners, induced him to seek his society most eagerly; and in a few days the pair became very intimate, dining together at the hotel, and walking or riding out in the evening. One day, after a short silence, the Frenchman said: 'I see you are wondering who and what I am; I will tell you: you may not believe me, but, as sure as we stand here in Modena, I am the son of Louis XVI.—the dauphin who is said to have died in the Temple.'

He then went on to detail the adventures of his life. Having made vain applications to the allies, and been attacked by assassins in Paris in 1814, he had gone in despair to South America, where, fighting for the cause of the independence of the Spanish colonies, he had been severely wounded in the thigh. He had then returned to Europe, and visited the island of Corsica, whence he had recently come to Modena (where he had frequently been in former years), to assert his rights to the Grand Duke, whom, he added, he had convinced of their genuineness. Connected and consistent throughout, this story was quite free from visible flaw or contradiction; and the Frenchman never swerved from a single point of it. It should be added, too, that his hearer was a lawyer by profession, a man accustomed to weigh and sift evidence, and of great natural shrewdness. The

stranger produced a passport which had been *visé* in Corsica. The name upon it was Charles Louis Bourlon; but he said he had easily changed the letter *b* of the name Bourbon into an *l*, and that he had done so to escape the fangs of the police of his uncle, Louis XVIII.

During several days' familiar intercourse, this strange man, though apparently speaking without the least premeditation, never let a word escape him that threw discredit on his narrative; and he never did or said anything that could possibly indicate him as other than a perfect gentleman in manners, feeling, and education.

The first and most natural conclusion to be drawn from his strange avowal was, that he was a monomaniac—a man mad on one particular point, but rational enough on all the rest. But the stranger spoke of his royal descent in a dispassionate and most reasonable tone, and on that, as well as on all other subjects, he was less vivacious and flighty than most Frenchmen are in the ordinary circumstances of life. His fund of anecdote, the elegance of his language, whether speaking French or Italian, and the variety of his acquirements, made him a delightful companion.

With much regret did Signor Candia leave Modena and the stranger's society, to return to the country. He was again called thither, two or three months afterwards, on business. He went to the same hotel, and had scarcely dismounted, when the host, with an air of uneasiness, asked whether he had heard what was become of his associate; and as he had not, told him that about a month before, the Frenchman had been suddenly arrested in the city, and carried to the state prison, where he was placed, with strict orders to treat him with all possible respect. These orders came from the Grand Duke himself, who, moreover, it was said, supplied the captive's table from his own palace. When he was first arrested, the keeper of the hotel, with his family, waiters, and other servants, and the people of the house where he last lived, were all summoned before the commissaries of police, and questioned as to the persons who had intimately associated with the Frenchman. Having revealed the very little they had to tell on this head, for the stranger's associates had been few and most respectable, they were dismissed, and advised to hold their tongues as to what had passed. It will be easy to conceive that Signor Candia was not made very comfortable by the foregoing intelligence. As the best step he could take, he went at once to his acquaintance the magistrate, acknowledged that he had been cultivating an intimacy with one who was now a state prisoner, and that he could hardly have expected there was any wrong in his so doing, after he had seen the stranger honoured by the first personages of Modena, and even by the sovereign himself. The magistrate reassured him; there was no cause, he said, for uneasiness—this was a mystery—a curious story, perhaps a serious one—but it concerned neither the Duke of Modena nor his subjects. Meanwhile, the prisoner had been carried across the frontiers, and had been given over to the Austrians, who conveyed him to the fortress of Mantua. For some time, even the Austrians treated him with the greatest respect; but afterwards, in consequence of sudden orders from Vienna, he was removed from the fortress of Mantua to the jail of Milan, and subjected to the treatment of a common criminal and cut-purse.

Here Signor Candia's own knowledge of his adventures ends, but we are able to take up and continue his story a little in a somewhat different form. Silvio Pellico, the Italian poet, tells in his *Confessions* that he was himself arrested in 1820 by the Austrian government, and thrown into the common prison of Milan, for political opinions. He found inscribed on the walls of his cell some elegant French verses, which were signed 'Le Duc de Normandie,' which was the title of the unfortunate dauphin. The poet began to hum over the verses, and this led to a conversation with another prisoner in a contiguous cell, who had formerly occupied Pellico's room. After some conversation, the poet asked who it was he had the honour of addressing. The stranger replied solemnly: 'The unhappy Duke of Normandy.' Pellico of course was very incredulous; but his fellow-captive went on to declare that he was in very truth Louis XVII. and that his uncle Louis XVIII. was the usurper of his rights.

'But why did you not assert these rights at the time of the restoration of the Bourbons?'

'I was then ill at Bologna. As soon as I recovered, I flew to France. I presented myself to the high allied powers; but what was done, was done. My iniquitous uncle would not acknowledge me, and my sister (the Duchess of Angoulême) united with him, to oppress me. The good Prince of Condé alone received me with open arms, but his friendship could do nothing for me. One night I was assaulted in the streets of Paris by ruffians, from whose daggers I escaped with difficulty. After having wandered for some time in Normandy, I returned into Italy, and fixed myself at Modena; thence writing incessantly to the monarchs of Europe, and particularly to the Emperor Alexander, who answered me with the greatest politeness, I did not despair of finally obtaining justice; or if, from policy, they were determined to sacrifice my rights to the throne of France, I thought at least they would assign me a decent *apanage*. At last I was arrested, conducted to the frontiers of the duchy of Modena, and given up to the Austrian government. I have now been buried here eight months, and God knows when I shall get out!'

Such was the strange narration, as well as Pellico could remember it after his own ten years of imprisonment and torture. 'He related this story,' says the poet, 'with an astonishing air of truth: though I could not believe it, I was forced to admire it. All the facts of the French revolution were most familiar to him; he spoke of that event with a great deal of spontaneous eloquence, and repeated a number of apposite and most curious anecdotes bearing upon it. There was something of the roughness of the soldier in his way of speaking, but yet it was never wanting in that eloquence which is obtained by frequenting refined society.'

'You will permit me,' said I, 'to treat you without ceremony, and drop titles?'

'That is what I wish,' replied he. 'I have at least derived this benefit from adversity—I can smile at all pomps and vanities; I assure you I value myself more as a man than as being a king.'

'Morning and evening,' continues Pellico, 'we held long conversations together; and in spite of what I considered amiss in him, his mind seemed to me upright, candid, and desirous of every moral

good. Several times I was on the point of saying to him: "Pardon me; I would fain believe you are Louis XVII.; but in sincerity I must confess that a conviction to the contrary is far too strong for me; be then so frank as to give up this imposture." But this candid speech was delayed from day to day, Pellico always waiting for an increase of their intimacy, never had the courage to say what he intended. The turnkeys of the prison, it appears, were all inclined to believe that he was really Louis XVII.; and as they had seen so many changes of political fortune, they were not without hopes that he would one day ascend the throne of France and remember their service to him. With the exception of favouring his escape, they treated him with all the kindness and respect he could desire. Through their favour, once, and once only, was Pellico allowed to see the mysterious man. He describes him as of middling stature, apparently between forty and forty-five years of age, rather fat, and of an essentially Bourbonic physiognomy. It is probable, so comments the sceptical poet, that an accidental resemblance to the Bourbons had induced him to play this miserable part. In the course of their melancholy conversations, which were carried on through the bars of their cell windows, out of sight of each other, they occasionally spoke of ethics and religion; and Pellico says the *soi-disant* duke was a man of religious feelings, though not altogether a good Catholic.

From these two very curious accounts it will appear that, let him have been what he might, the prisoner of Milan was no common impostor. The little that remains to be told still more darkens this singular romance of real and modern life. After a long confinement at Milan, during which many of the political prisoners besides Pellico became acquainted with him, the Frenchman was liberated, but escorted out of Lombardy and the Austrian dominions by gendarmes. He took the route across the Lake of Como and the Alps; and, a few days after his departure from Milan, a person answering to his description was found dead by the road-side in one of the Swiss valleys. The body was pierced by more than one wound; but whether they had been dealt by the hand of a suicide or an assassin, could not be clearly ascertained. No doubt, however, was entertained in Milan that the body thus found was that of the strange man who had called himself the Duke of Normandy and Louis XVII.

ODDS AND ENDS:

FROM DR ROBERT CHAMBERS'S SCRAP-BOOK.

COINCIDENCES.—One is often much startled by coincidences—as the following. Waiting in an inn at Morpeth for the resting of a gig-horse (October 1844), I took out a little copy of Crabbe's *Borough*, which I carried along with me as a resource for amusement on such occasions. I had asked for the London newspaper of the preceding day, but was told it had not yet arrived. The section of the poem upon which my attention became engaged was that in which the striking description occurs of a pleasure-party surprised by the rising tide on a low sandy island, from which their boat had floated away during their merry-making:

Had one been there with spirit strong and high,
Who could observe, as he prepared to die,
He might have seen that not the gentle maid
Was more than stern and haughty man afraid;
Such, calmly grieving will their fears suppress,
And silent prayers to mercy's throne address;
While fiercer minds, impatient, angry, loud,
Force their vain grief on the reluctant crowd.

Immediately after I read this passage, the waiter handed in the *Sun* of the preceding evening, in which I found an account, from a Scotch paper, of a distressing affair which had taken place the preceding week on board the *Benledi* steamer, while on her way from Dundee to Edinburgh. The vessel, full of a pleasure-seeking multitude, who had been witnessing the Queen's departure from Dundee, had been allowed to strike on the Carr Rock, when instantly fiddling and dancing were exchanged for alarm and terror, as the almost immediate sinking of the ship was anticipated. Strange to say, the description of the conduct of the passengers was an exact reflection of that in Crabbe's poem, inasmuch, that I have no doubt that the writer of the description had recently been reading that poem—unless, indeed, it was a true report of an actual scene in both instances. Anyhow, the identity was most wonderful, even to the particular of gentle women maintaining a quiet and resigned demeanour, while strong men were frantic with vain terror. What one feels on such an occasion as this is surprise that years—a lifetime—should have passed without either of the two matters having come under observation, but at length both come within ten minutes of each other—against which, of course, there must have been numberless chances.

SOURCES OF TROUBLE.—It may be doubted if anything which requires constant keeping and care be worth the trouble. Fine house-furniture, fine pictures, and finery of various kinds, are all apt to be sources of vexation. Much plate in a house is a still greater torment, for it leads to a constant apprehension of thieves. In this way, a man gets tyrannised over by a great many things which, in his simplicity, he imagined would give him nothing but pleasure. Douglas Jerrold, I think, points this out in some of his writings.

COURTSHIP.—In courtship, the men are supposed to be in the active, and women in the passive voice. Exceptions are recognised as occasionally taking place; but the world notes not a vast multitude of cases in which the lady, though not apparently, is the actual originator of affairs which end in matrimony. By means which trench not in the least on delicacy—by a mere *manner*, susceptible on challenge of a different interpretation—she can dispose the soft heart of man to the reception of an interest in her, which he will believe to be of his own originating. It is strange how literature has almost overlooked this fact in our social life, considering that it affords such excellent opportunities for nice delineation of feeling.

UNAMIALENES.—It is hard to say so, but stern propriety, rigid temperance, and the practice of early rising and the shower-bath, are among the grand supporters of human pride and the conspicuous causes of human unamiableness. By sternness no good is effected.

TELEGRAPHY.—The value of the electric telegraph in arresting the flight of criminals, thereby checking crime, has perhaps not been sufficiently recognised. Instances in which petty offenders are overtaken, at little or no expense, are sometimes amusing. One day, as we read in the newspapers, a rough-spun country butcher, whose travelling companion was a dog, took a ticket at one of the stations on the Midland Railway for Birmingham. It was shortly afterwards ascertained by the officials that he had a dog in the carriage with him. On being remonstrated with, and told that he must pay for the dog, he refused, and a regular brawl commenced, in the course of which the butcher got out of the carriage, and the dog followed. Here the disturbance was renewed, and the war grew fiercer, when all of a sudden, the train started. The butcher, forgetting his indignation at the parties, turned round, and jumped into his place again, followed by the dog. The train went on; the coarse burly man, laughing at having cheated the railway officers, told the whole of the affair to the passengers with great glee, and concluded by saying that they might *tallyscope* about him; he didn't care; he had done 'em, and they couldn't tell 'em at Birmingham before he got there, he was sure. On the train arriving at its destination, a gentleman in blue livery, with sundry hieroglyphics on his collar, touched the butcher on the shoulder, and said: 'Sir, you have a dog with you, for which the fare has not been paid; you must either pay out the money, or I take you into custody.' The *tallyscope*, as the butcher called it, had arrived at Birmingham first, and the butcher's feelings may be better imagined than described. The money was paid, and he would not probably try this trick any more. The electric telegraph is a moral agent.

AFFECTIVE FACULTIES.—Having much of one of the affective faculties, we do not like to be exposed to the acute exercise of the same faculty in others. A person with large veneration shrinks from being an object of veneration to others. (To one with large self-esteem, the veneration of others is, on the contrary, agreeable.) One with large acquisitiveness detests being subjected to the action of powerful acquisitiveness in his neighbours. It has often been observed that individuals who are much given to jesting at the expense of their fellow-creatures cannot endure to be the subject of other people's jokes, and that great censurers and reprovers hate to be in the least rebuked or found fault with.

A WASTED LIFE.—What a distressing spectacle is that of a man of talent approaching to old age not only without the consciousness of having employed his abilities to any permanent good purpose for the benefit of mankind, but with the sense of having written in behalf of errors and exploded fallacies all the time, and in favour of a party which has come to natural ruin in the course of time, and can now do nothing for him—not even give him sympathy in his misfortune. When such a man reflects on his wasted existence, and compares his

position with that of one who took a directly opposite course—that is, worked for good and not for evil, or, it may be, worked uselessly and misspent his life—how painful must be his feelings, if at all sensitive!

DRAWING INFERENCES.—At one time—the seventeenth century—a common standard of religious belief was a belief in witches. If you denied witchcraft, you denied everything, and ran a fair chance of being burnt at the stake. A writer in the *British Quarterly Review*, iii. 139, gives some instances of this vicious, and we might now say exploded, standard of belief. 'The learned Joseph Glanvill wrote a book of "philosophical considerations touching the being of witches," with a view to the confutation of infidelity! That great man, Sir Thomas Browne, said: "For my own part, I have ever believed, and now do believe that there are witches. They that doubt of these do not only deny them, but spirits, and are obliquely and upon conscience not only infidel but atheistic." Cudworth held that "those who disbelieved witchcraft can hardly escape the suspicion of some hankering towards atheism." Talking of Sir Thomas Browne, that "great man," as the reviewer calls him, made as notable a mistake regarding the end of the world as he did about witches. He says: "We whose generations are ordained in this settling part of time." The settling part of time! Why, the world, on the contrary, is still merely in its infancy. A large part of it is not yet discovered, and a still larger portion has not got out of a state of primeval barbarism.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE.—In one of his poems, Burns ventilates a wholesome wish:

O wad some Power the giftie gie us,
To see oursel's as ithers see us.

The difficulty is, how the thing is to be done. Seeing ourselves as others see us is no easy matter. In the first place, owing to the complaisance and timidity of mankind, there is usually a great difficulty in knowing what others really think of us. The rules of good breeding are completely antagonistic to it. The world wears a mask—not from bad motives, but to make things pleasant. How to see behind the mask, is the point for consideration. Great acuteness and vigilance, also great candour towards one's self, are indispensable in acquiring self-knowledge by such means. Then, we are beset by no end of notions of our own sufficiency. How, except by some tremendously severe self-searching and consciousness of human infirmity, can we get at the truth regarding ourselves. There is a possibility of our going on in great errors almost to the end of life, where not roused to a sense of them by some inlet of criticism from others. Obviously, there are large numbers who go on recklessly in the commission of criminal actions, who never seriously think what they are about, and are only for the first time brought to their senses in humiliating penal solitude. It is there they see themselves as others see them, though it may be rather late in the day. In ordinary affairs, one might be the better of even knowing whether any of his personal manners are disagreeable, whether he speaks too much or too loudly, whether he is thought to be too silent or too communicative; or, if a lady, whether she is not dressing too gaily for her years, and so forth.

'ONLY A WOMAN'S HAIR.'

LATE judge beside an Indian river,
My wife's great-uncle, frail and old,
Minus his temper and his liver,
Came home with stores of wealth untold.

We'd named our eldest boy Ramchunder;
We'd called our house 'The Mangostines';
And, but for a domestic blunder,
Should now enjoy his princely means.

We laid down yards of Indian matting;
Compounded jars of sangaree;
The cook had turned, by constant patting,
Our Dorset butter into ghee.

We warmed the house from base to attics,
Although the season was July;
He brought a train of Asiatics,
Whose faces made the children cry.

My wife received him in a hurry,
Her brow perplexed with household care;
Sho'd been all day about the curry,
With scarcely time to dress her hair.

The children then were all paraded;
He loudly blessed our little Ram;
Each wore a tussah richly braided,
And each performed a deep salaam.

We closed the windows while at dinner;
How hot the soup and chutney were!
John punkah'd well for a beginner;
My wife wore roses in her hair.

The pains we'd taken were not wasted;
He promised our sauce of capsicum;
Said that such pepper he'd not tasted
Since with the Rifles at Dum-Dum.

The curry! careful preparation,
With glowing chillis round it stuck,
Appeared; he sniffed his approbation,
And trifled with a Bombay duck.

The rice was dried to pure perfection;
He filled his mouth—a silence fell—
Then starting, with an interjection,
Which I am too polite to tell—

He gasped, he wheezed, he coughed, he spluttered;
We loosed his stock, we gave him air,
And with a stifled voice he muttered:
'You've choked me with a filthy hair.'

Alas! it was no hair of minion;
My wife confessed she dressed in haste,
And while Maria combed her chignon,
Herself had mixed the curry paste!

They proved the will of Thule Crompton,
By which we never got a groat;
His thousands found their way to Brompton,
For the Diseases of the Throat.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.
Also sold by all Booksellers.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 532.

SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 1874.

Price 1d.

IN DANGER.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

'YES, yes, yes! To be sure, I will—that is, of course, if I can,' said my godfather, rattling the half-crowns in his pocket so loudly that the silvery jingle caused the other occupants of the strangers' room to cast sidelong glances at the proprietor of these obtrusive coins, and at myself, as we stood together near the door. 'It's late, though, at three-and-twenty, to break gauge, and be shunted on to a new line, Jack, my lad,' added the speaker, after a brief pause; 'but I never did approve, myself, of your reading for the bar, as you did.'

'It was my poor mother's wish, you know,' I replied; 'but the study of law and equity was never much to my taste, and I suspect I shall prove more useful in a less ambitious calling. I do know a little of geometry and surveying, and'

'That's true,' interrupted my companion, who was always in a hurry, and who had also an unconscious preference for the sound of his own voice. 'You did credit to my recommendation when I helped you to earn the only lump of guineas you ever made in your life, on the staff of the Pontypool Extension. And Clewett—a good judge, Ned Clewett—regretted to see a young fellow with such a knack at the theodolite thrown away in Lincoln's Inn. I've no time to talk now. Board-meeting in the City first, and then to catch the fast four-o'clock for Grimsby. But dine with me here on Tuesday—no, Wednesday; sharp seven, mind—and perhaps you'll hear of something to your advantage, as the newspapers say.' And then, with a hasty hand-shake, he was gone; and I felt my heart considerably lightened as I emerged through the stately portals, and descended the stone steps of the mighty *Megalosaurus Club*, affectionately known as the 'Meg' among its members, a committee-man among whom was my sponsor, John Grubstock.

A very rich man was my godfather Grubstock, whose name of John had been bestowed upon

myself, John Aylmer Masterton, at my christening. He was not reckoned rich at that time, but merely, in financial parlance, 'warn;' and it was considered as a compliment to his sterling worth, not to his worldly status, that he was invited to play so important a part at the baptismal ceremony. Grubstocks and Aylmers were, both families of them, somehow akin to us Mastertons; but we naturally thought more of the more aristocratic *gens* of Aylmer than of the plain patronymic of the sturdy civil engineer. Drink, debt, and high play had, however, improved the former race off the surface of that earth on which they had done little but to swagger and to spend; while Cousin John Grubstock had thriven exceedingly. Few were the City pies, in his own peculiar line of harbour and tunnel, of suspension-bridge and tramway, in which he had not a finger, deft in the pulling out of golden plums. Too practical a man, and too honourable withal, for mere speculations not propped by a solid basis of actual fact, his very name had grown to be the surest guarantee for the carrying out of an enterprise; and 'Safe John Grubstock is in it' was a rumour that would send up the shares of any freshly floated company. He worked hard yet, but it was for sheer love of work, and the habit of restlessness which becomes second nature to the more active of his profession. That he would die in harness was what gossips predicted. The full extent of his possessions would probably never be known until his will should go up for probate. His wealth accrued fast; and his quiet wife and daughters, happy among their azaleas and croquet-lawns at Dorking, made no attempt, by profuse expenditure, to keep pace with the increment of his revenue. In the trying times of my father's sudden death and my mother's lingering illness, Mr Grubstock had approved himself a friend both liberal and delicate.

As for myself, my history had up to this time been as uneventful as that of most young Englishmen of my age, bred up in a country vicarage, and, after three years of reading and rowing at Oxford, going into forensic training as a law-student at one of the Inns of Court. Of course, having no

money worth speaking of, and no prospect of any, I had fallen in love, and almost equally, as a matter of course, the object of my affections was as poor as myself. Pretty, darling Kate Carrington! Our engagement had already endured for fourteen months, and she and I seemed likely to add another couple to the long list of betrothed pairs that wait and wait through the long vista of hopes deferred. I was sometimes sanguine of success, and had a young man's confidence in the future; and I daresay Kate would have consented, for my sake, to try the experiment of love in a cottage, with an insufficiency of butcher-meat and groceries, had it not been for her great tenderness towards her widowed mother. It was not to be thought of that Mrs Carrington, who was elderly, and but badly off, since some imprudent venture, at ever so much per cent. had sorely pinched and clipped her modest income, should be deprived of her remaining comforts that Kate and I might marry somewhat earlier. The old lady, who had the tender-hearted love of match-making which supplies an element of romance in the seniors of her sex, would, to do her justice, have smilingly confronted the perils of semi-starvation; but Kate stood firm on that point. 'No, no,' she said to me, more than once, as on summer evenings we stood together in her mother's tiny garden at Clapham; 'I must not be selfish, dear John. I would work for you, want with you, if need were, and we are young, and might struggle through; but poor mamma has never known what hardship really is, and at her time of life it is too late to begin. So we must be very brave, and good, and patient—must we not?'

But if we were to wait till I should make a livelihood at the bar, how long might our probation be! I had not the luck to be connected by ties of blood or friendship with a single attorney. I had taken stock of my own qualifications as a barrister, and knew that I should never climb the slippery rungs of the ladder leading to the few great prizes of the profession. Leaving attorney-generalships and judicial wigs to other aspirants, I saw no speedy prospect of a decent maintenance to be earned at the bar. I saw men, older and more brilliant than myself, glad to pay their way by law-reporting, or perhaps diverging into literary by-paths that had no more to do with the Themis of England than with the Pandects or the Koran. The steady old special pleader in whose chambers I had been, for a heavy fee, allowed to read, shook his experienced head at the notion of my earning my bread, for some years at least, by legitimate professional business, and yet I was a pet pupil, as being less idle than the others whom he instructed.

'Small profits, Mr Masterton,' he would say, 'and slow returns, as respects the junior, are the rules in our calling. I really almost wish you had selected a walk in life, my dear young friend, more new-fashioned than this of wearing horse-hair, and waiting till the stuff-gown be changed to silk, and the clerk be familiar with briefs and retainers. I think you could do better elsewhere.' I thought so too, and having some theoretical knowledge, and some slight practice as a surveyor and civil engineer, I decided on asking Mr Grubstock to use his good offices on my behalf.

It was with a beating heart that on the appointed day I returned to the 'Meg,' to dine with my godfather, and to hear the result of my late petition

for his powerful aid. I found Mr Grubstock in high spirits and bluff good-humour.

'I've not forgotten you, my boy,' he said, filling my glass with a rare vintage of straw-coloured sherry; 'and indeed I have done better for you than I ever expected to do. Have you heard anything of the Caspian Navigation Company, eh? The shares are at a premium, and quite right they should be, for it's a *bonâ fide* concern, sure to pay a tidy dividend to those who can afford to wait. I'm a director, and I got hold of Jowley, and Barrett, and Hicks, and one or two more of the old set, who are on the Board too; and the long and short of it is, that you are to be offered the appointment of acting engineer-in-chief, at one of the branch ports, at a salary of five hundred a year.'

Five hundred a year! The announcement thus abruptly made almost took my breath away. Why, I could marry Kate, now, with such an income to rely on, and the sudden shock of joy almost incapacitated me from thanking my patron for his good deed on my behalf. It was indeed great promotion.

'You'll have to go rather far afield, my boy,' remarked my godfather, holding up his wine-glass for a moment between his eye and the light, before sipping its amber-tinted contents; 'and to rough it too, for a time, very likely; but what of that, when one is young, healthy, and a bachelor; and Kizil-Gatch is not a place for luxuries, I suspect.'

'Kizil-Gatch!' The queer sound of the name recalled to my remembrance the fact, that my future residence must be, not in England, but in a wild and distant country, where civilisation was slowly and gradually gaining the mastery over moral and physical obstacles. Well, I had no reason to complain. Mine would be a well-rewarded exile, and I anticipated little difficulty in inducing Kate and her mother to share my new home far away. Five hundred a year! And this to be attained at once by one who could not in fairness be accounted as anything but a mere tyro, and who would cheerfully have accepted an assistant-surveyor's post at less than half the rate of salary which would now be mine.

'You don't exactly know where you are going to,' said Mr Grubstock, at a later stage of the dinner; 'and small blame to you, since I never heard of the place myself until they shewed it to me on the Board-room map. You'll have to hunt it out yourself, and you'll find it to be one of the southernmost places in the Russian territory, on the west shore of the Caspian, not very far from the Persian frontier. Great natural capabilities, I'm told, but everything to be done, from dock-digging to building warehouses. If only you will work, as I pledged myself you would, and keep yourself wide awake to the Company's interests, your acting appointment will be confirmed in a few months; and in that cheap country you will find your pay go very far. A dab at languages, are you not?'

I replied with becoming diffidence that I had always been considered as a quick learner, but had no right to call myself more of a linguist than the majority of my educated countrymen.

'You talk good French, and are glib in German, I believe,' said the civil engineer, refilling his glass with claret. 'Don't you speak, or write, anything else, beyond that precious Latin and Greek on which, to my thinking, you wasted your best years.'

'Scarcely,' I answered. 'As for Italian, I can read Dante and Tasso, and perhaps converse with a waiter or an organ-grinder; but that exhausts the list of my attainments, unless you count a very little Arabic, and the merest smattering of one or two Eastern tongues. My father, you may remember, was fond of such studies.'

'Ay, ay! What they called a learned Orientalist,' grumbled Mr Grubstock; 'although I can't conceive what a country parson wants with the lingo of a parcel of barbarians who write the wrong way, and cover the paper with ugly spattering characters like so many crooked nails, with dots over them. But that's neither here nor there. Why, I never could shape my mouth to speak anything but the tongue my mother taught me, and yet I have laid out railroads, and enlarged harbours in half-a-dozen foreign countries, and have paid and managed hundreds of navies that could not have understood me if I had asked for a mug of water or a serew of tobacco. I am a plain John Bull of the old breed, and not young enough to alter. But to chatter and parleyvous is a valuable accomplishment to a lad with the ladder to climb, and be sure that I made the most of your fine education when I canvassed for your appointment! Come up to the Board on Monday, in Abchurch Lane, City, and we'll give you your credentials.—No more wine? Well, then, good-night!'

On leaving the *Megalosaurus*, I made my way as quickly as I could to Clapham, and electrified Kate and Mrs Carrington by the startling announcement of my unexpected good fortune. There was exultation around the little tea-table in Acacia Cottage on that night; for had not Pactolus, so to speak, overflowed for our joint benefit, and might not the wedded happiness of two faithful lovers be reckoned as secured! Five hundred a year! The sum seemed to us as round a one as the salary of a bishop or a judge appears to doctors of divinity and Queen's Counsel. Money, like time, is elastic, and capable of being meted by very different measures. For what, to some of us, are five hundred sovereigns! a flea-bite, a trifle to swell the comfortable balance at the banker's, a lucky windfall on the Stock Exchange or the racecourse, the result of a rise in Turkish, or of the 'dark' horse's victory, when a 'fiver' had been laid on him; a mere morsel that sharpens the gold-hunger. What do the three figures represent to others? an unattainable pile of wealth, or the possible savings of long toil and penurious thrift! But we ourselves had been poor long enough to know the value of such an income as that which had at once been placed within my reach, and we did not philosophise much as to its relative proportion to the earnings or the outlay of the remainder of the human race.

I do believe that Mrs Carrington would have been foremost in promoting an immediate marriage between Kate and myself, and would have accompanied the newly married pair on what would have perhaps been the strangest honeymoon trip ever yet taken; but I felt myself in duty bound to be prudent. After all, there are proverbially many slips between the cup and the lip, and something might be untoward enough to come between me and the realisation of my not unselfish hopes of peaceful joy. The Company might drift upon the rocks of insolvency, not that there seemed to be much fear of that with 'safe John Grubstock' at the helm; while

I knew Messrs Jowley and Hicks, whom my god-father had mentioned as his fellow-directors, to be men of large means and unblemished integrity. Or, more probably, I might be weighed and found wanting. After all, I was not vain enough to regard myself as even a second-rate engineer, being only too conscious that I was ignorant of much theoretical lore that it would have been good for me to know, while my actual experiences had been on a very small scale. My appointment might not, on trial, be confirmed. And yet I did not feel very dispirited, as I recalled to my memory Mr Clewett's words, spoken two years before, at the termination of my three months' engagement in laying out the Pontypool Extension: 'I'm sorry, Masterton, to part with you. You are worth your salt, old chap; and if ever you like to get a living by the chains and the dumpy level, come to me.' Then there was another consideration—the rough rawness of the barbaric country whither I was bound, and which hardly rendered it as yet a fitting place for the residence of ladies. I must feather my nest, far away, before I tempted so dainty a mate as Kate Carrington to share it.

We were, however, very happy and very hopeful—I am speaking of Kate and myself—as befitting our years; while Mrs Carrington, whose interest in the matter was necessarily vicarious, was as elated and as sanguine as we were, and made no more, in fancy, of the long route to Asiatic Russia, and of the prospect of passing the evening of her days among outlandish beards, turbans, caffans, and lamb's-wool caps, than if I had simply proposed a run up the Rhine, or a tour in Switzerland. It is the privilege of old women, when innocent and soft of heart, to retain much of their girlish freshness of imagination, mellowed, rather than dimmed, by the lapse of years; and that is why a kindly matron can often afford to take indulgent and genial views of life, at an age when Paterfamilias seems peril or fraud in every breeze that blows, and regards each stranger askance, as a possible burglar, begging-letter impostor, or collector of income-tax.

That I was exact in keeping my appointment at the Board meeting in Abchurch Lane, need hardly be said, and when my turn came to be summoned by the plethoric porter in crimson plush and blazing buttons, I was very kindly received by the directors. Most of these were English, British capital being, as usual, the backbone of this Anglo-Russian enterprise; but there were also three or four Muscovitos, shrewd-eyed, sallow men of the world, who no doubt thought, as they spoke, with perfect fluency in any and every European language, and whose opinion was evidently held in high esteem by their London colleagues. These, however, seemed to approve of me, after a sharp scrutiny, and some conversation, even more than did the English directors, who accepted me for my sponsor's sake; and the reason for this Mr Grubstock himself told me, chuckling, as he left the room with me, after my formal nomination had been succeeded by a hearty hand-shaking and a no less hearty health-drinking in some old Madeira that had been impounded for the refreshment of the Board.

'You see, Jack!—such were the old capitalist's words—these fellows would have none of us, if they could do without, first our sixpences, and then our men. But they can't. And old Slopsoff

yonder—he with the gray whiskers and the order at his button-hole—told me just now, that he saw you were neither a rogue nor a fool; and that's exactly what is wanted for a roving, rough-and-ready career like that which lies before you. My dear boy, they are clever, and to spare, these Russkies, but in their country the best engineers get sucked up into government service, and the residue of instructed men are apt to be rabid revolutionists, or uncommonly slippery practitioners—you understand. That's why they would rather have a fellow like you, who won't muddle the accounts, or cook up a mutiny in the province, than the best certificated professor that ever had Envy for a bosom-snake, d'ye see! Why, we sent a man there—Karatchin, his name was, corresponding member of a score of scientific societies, and about the best hydraulic hand I recollect—and he's a prisoner in Siberia now, and prosecuting his explorations in the malachite mines. Work, I say, and don't sink into a drudge for mere routine; and if you are not a permanent official before the year's out, my name is not John Grubstock.' And with this cheering assurance I departed.

The next week or two were spent in procuring the needful outfit, and in laying in, at the costs and charges of the Caspian Navigation Company, a stock of the necessary instruments, and a supply of such drugs and chemicals as it is incumbent on the chief of a station in those wild regions to keep under lock and key in case of an emergency. There were the submarine cartridges; the battery and its silk-wrapped and gutta-percha coated wires for blasting sunken rocks; the newest apparatus for taking soundings of the Caspian's depths, the diver's helmet and air-pump; the quinine that would be our mainstay during the feverish heats of summer; the firearms; the lint and bandages; the remedies against ophthalmia; the creosote to protect our timber-piles from the insidious attacks of the teredo; and many another necessary, besides the ordinary tools of trade, without which a surveyor becomes useless. I was to take out with me a perfect miscellany of portable treasures of this kind, while bulkier and heavier desiderata, such as tools, clothing, and machinery, were to follow by a slower means of transit. In the course of this prefatory experience, I found the Company to be liberal and considerate paymasters; and before I left London, the secretary went so far as to hint that any signal service would meet with substantial recognition, over and above the punctual payment of my regular salary.

'You see, Mr Masterton,' he said, 'ours is a young concern, and we wish to borrow a leaf from the book of Brother Jonathan—to go ahead, sir, instead of crawling on in a slow, humdrum way. We are chartered as a Navigation Company, and we mean to make harbours, build ships, and run packets from end to end of the big inland sea; but all is fish that comes to our net—mine, quarry, forest, or petroleum well; so keep your ears open for any report the truth of which seems worth investigating; send home reports that are lucid as well as faithful, and, trust me! We shall not muzzle the ox that treads out the corn—you understand me!'

I did understand, and, at that moment, would scarcely have changed places with a Rothschild.

Then came the parting from Kate, but its bitter-

ness was mightily sweetened by the potent talisman of Hope. 'It was but for a little time, after all; a short, short absence.' I wonder how often each of us repeated those flattering words to the other, and really the prospect of our speedy reunion seemed very near. The Company's affairs were in a promising condition; which, it appeared, as if nothing but war could affect, and of war, despite a few journalistic growls, when Russian interests clashed with those of England, there was little chance. I began to feel quite sanguine as to my giving satisfaction to my new employers, fortified as I was by the honest resolution to deserve their good opinion. I was too robust of constitution to dread the fatigues and hardships inseparable from my future mode of life; and unless I should be swamped in some Caspian squall, or stabbed by a crazed Mohammedan fanatic, could scarcely fail to prove serviceable and successful. As for the work that lay before me, I looked forward to it with a positive liking, such as I could never have entertained for the most lucrative practice at the bar. To struggle with the unyoked forces of nature, and to bring the rugged wilderness, as it were, into subjection to mankind, was a task more congenial to me than to secure a verdict by browbeating adverse witnesses, or by heaping up folio after folio of elaborate pleadings on behalf of a client whom I might more than suspect to be in the wrong. In Central Asia, at any rate, every stroke of the pickaxe, every revolution of the steam-paddle, was one step gained towards progress and enlightenment.

At last I was fairly off, for Moscow first, and then for the Volga and Astrakhan; Kate's tears yet fresh upon my cheek, the pressure of her trembling fingers seeming yet to clasp mine, as I hurried on board the mail-packet at Dover, and looked back for the last time at the tall white cliffs, like giant sentinels, glinting white and ghostly in the moonlight. Many a day must elapse, no doubt, before I should again tread English ground, but I had Hope for the companion of my voyage, and I looked confidently forward to my return, one day, to a life of competence in my native land. I should not long have to remain solitary in the country that was to be my residence for some years to come. It had been quite arranged that so soon as my appointment should receive its formal confirmation, Mrs Carrington and Kate were to set forth to Russia; and I had little doubt of easily obtaining leave of absence long enough to enable me to meet them at Moscow, or St Petersburg, where the wedding might be solemnised in the British Consulate, or the Embassy chapel, and whence the mother and daughter could travel, under my escort, to their new home, on the shores of the Caspian.

My journey out presented no features of any remarkable interest. Corn-plain succeeded to forest, and forest to pasture, as the train swept onwards through the green birch-groves of Poland, through the black pine-woods of Russia, and past the countless villages of blue or red roofed hovels, the oriental domes of the little churches, painted in gaudy colours or plated with glittering metal, flashing back the rays of the sun. Then came the descent of the turbid river, the crowded steamer slowly ploughing up the yellow waters, and presently it was the silvery sheet of the Caspian that rolled away before me, shimmering

under a sky of unclouded blue. At Astrakhan, I embarked, after some delay, in a small and rickety boat, the commander of which preferred, perhaps prudently, to hug the shore, instead of striking boldly out into the trackless waters of the huge inland sea, so that the voyage was a tedious one; but it was over at last. 'What is the name of yonder bay, where the red cliffs rise so picturesquely from the gleaming strip of beach, and where the islands rest, green and feathery with hazel boughs, on the surface of the lake?' I seemed to be certain of the answer before the words were framed. It was Kizil-Gatch—the Red Gulf—my new home.

THE CASPIAN SEA.

THE late successful march of a Russian army to and from Khiva has directed attention to the extensive wildernesses which border the shores of the Caspian Sea. That great inland sea of salt water with no outlet to the ocean, but the reservoir of the Volga and other rivers, is one of the geographical wonders of the world. By geologists it is considered to be the chief remnant of a vast sheet of water which once stretched across Europe from the Euxine to the northern Polar Ocean. The changes to produce this result were caused by no great convulsion, but took place slowly and imperceptibly. In the present day, armies toil over solitudes dreary and saline, once the bottom of a sea more vast than the Mediterranean.

Humboldt has described under the name of the concavity of the Caspian basin, that enormous extent of land, as large as France, which the Caspian would even now cover, if its level were equal to that of the Black Sea; but it is, in fact, eighty-five feet lower. The low plains around Astrakhan have nothing picturesque about them; they cannot be compared to the southern shore of Mazanderan, where the shadowy palm-tree waves its branches, and the green hills and blue distances of Demavend present such beautiful landscapes; nor to the Caucasus mountains, raising above the waters their plains of verdure, where the defile of Derbend, guarded by its city, built like an amphitheatre, or a pyramid of gigantic blocks of stone, charms the eye; but it is in the northern plains, with their desolation and uniformity, that the work of the ocean may be clearly read by the geologist.

The Russians divide these steppes according to the nature of the soil, into the sandy, the rocky, and the saline; the first form the greater part of the western basin; the rocky plains extend eastwards in the direction of Tartary; and the saline occupy a considerable space between the Volga and the Ural. As a general rule, they all merit the title of desert; and when the locusts arrive, which is very frequently, there does not remain a single blade of grass, and the reeds growing near the marshes are eaten to the very level of the water. It may be imagined how miserable is the scene in the depth of winter, when the great plain is concealed under a veil of snow, which the icy wind raises in whirlwinds; but even in the joyous season of summer there is nothing pleasing in the broad extent of white and red sand, with a patch here and there of spurge or mugwort shewing their dark leaves. Sometimes the traveller crosses with difficulty a deep ravine worn by the torrents of rain, then skirts a marsh, with its water glancing

through a forest of reeds. In the distance, a clump of willows marks a saline spring: the breeze blowing over the burning steppe raises a cloud of dust. The remains of dried-up plants rush along by thousands, curiously rolled into balls by the wind, seeming to pursue each other, and leaping up many yards in height, as if they were living beings. At the end of each stage the carriage stops before a miserable cabin, half-buried in the sand, where a human figure appears; but rarely are the tents of the Kalmucks or Kirghiz tribes seen, and hundreds of leagues may be traversed without a trace of man.

The largest of these steppes exceeds five hundred miles. The coasts of the Caspian to the north are flat, and the banks of sand render navigation almost impossible, where the mighty streams of the Volga, the Terek, the Ural, and the Emba, ceaselessly labour to fill up the sea itself. To the south, the Caspian divides itself into two basins; a peninsula almost meeting the opposite coast. According to local tradition, it was possible to walk across from Baku to Tartary; thus the depth of the water varies much, in some places not exceeding eight or nine feet; and its greatest depth is a few hundred feet. At recurring periods of seven years, it increases about three feet, and then diminishes for the next seven. The saltiness of the water also is very unequal: where the rivers pour in the fresh stream it is possible to drink it; in other places it is charged with salt, a fact which has given rise to much discussion.

From the salt part of the sea, narrow canals run into the land, which, being in time evaporated by the heat of the desert, become real magazines of salt. Some of the more ancient bays present a number of basins with every degree of saline concentration. One is still receiving water from the sea, and has only deposited on its banks a very thin layer of salt; in a second, the ground is concealed by a thick crust of rose crystals, like a marble pavement; a third is one compact mass of salt, where a little pool of water shines here and there; and another has lost all the water by evaporation, and the strata of salt is already partially covered by sand.

In all this, it will be perceived, there is a resemblance between the Caspian and the Dead Sea. The waters of both escape only by evaporation, and each is distinguished by its intense saline properties, as well as by salt on its margin.

Of the thousand bays and lagoons storing the salt of the Caspian, none is more remarkable than that of Karaboghaz, an inland sea which probably once united the Sea of Hyrcania with the Sea of Aral. It covers an immense space of ground, whilst the canal connecting it with the Caspian is never deeper than seven yards, and the current runs at a speed of three knots an hour. All the navigators of the Sea, and the wandering Turkomans, are struck with the steady unrestrained flow of this salt water rolling through black reefs, and fancy an abyss must swallow up the water, and lead it by subterranean paths to the Persian Gulf. But science can explain it very satisfactorily. In this basin, exposed to high winds and intense heat, evaporation goes on very rapidly; the immense marsh over which it flows keeps the salt, and concentrates it, only restoring to the atmosphere the water brought by the Caspian current. Already no animal can live in it; the seals which used to

visit its shores come no longer; the shores are deprived of vegetation. Layers of salt cover the bottom, and the sounding-line comes up coated with salt crystals. It is believed that the Karaboghaz daily receives three hundred and fifty thousand tons of salt—more than is consumed in the Russian empire in six months. After violent tempests, its extent is soon diminished, its banks are transformed into immense fields of salt, and its appearance is that of a marsh only.

Not more singular are the volcanic forces at work under the soil at Bakii, and even recently, an island has suddenly risen near the shore. The springs of naphtha are most abundant; about fourteen miles from Baku are the hot springs, which were called the eternal fires, and were for centuries worshipped in the temple of the Persian sect of Guebres; but the city is now deserted. A stray spark will at most places set fire to the gas which issues from the ground, and during stormy nights a mantle of light hangs its phosphorescent folds on the sides of the mountains. The labourer dare not dig too large a hole, or the naphtha would flow in such quantities that it cannot be stopped. Even in the midst of the sea, it boils on the surface of the waves, and spreads a rainbow-like film; a burning torch thrown on the water creates an immense conflagration. What riches are buried beneath these shores! Every year, more than fifteen hundred tons of liquid naphtha are pumped up, but the torrents of gas freely escape into the air, some charcoal-burners alone making use of it.

In some parts of the coast, the indentations have a most remarkable form, resembling in a striking manner the *fjords* of Norway; the islands and peninsulas extend a long way into the sea, forming chains interrupted by the water, which has worked its way through the rock. The thousands of canals which separate them are an unexplored labyrinth even to the fishermen, and the most exact map can give little idea of this mingled scene of islands, channels, and bays. They do not possess the wild grandeur of Norway; the height is not great, and there are ugly banks of sand; neither are the shores bordered by precipitous rocks, down which flow mighty cascades; and the horizon is closed by the level plain of the steppes instead of the glaciers of the Scandinavian Alps: still they are not inferior in geological interest. The Russians have steamers on the Caspian sailing regularly between Astrakhan and Petrolaka, on which a great variety of character may be seen, half Asiatic, half European.

Had Russia known how to profit by the immense commercial advantages of the Caspian Sea, the regions around it would not be in their present depopulated condition. In the whole world there is probably not a sea more admirably placed for the commerce of the world than the Russian Mediterranean. Situated in the centre of a continent, it bathes the shores of Europe and Asia, extends its bays on the plains of the north, whilst in the south it reflects the vegetation of the tropics, and unites two worlds, which the Caucasus tries in vain to separate by its giant walls of rock and ice. It seems destined to become the great commercial road of Europe when a railway is made through Southern Russia to Rostow, Stravopol, Derbent, Baku, and by the southern shore into Afghanistan, Cabool, Lahore, to Calcutta; but many years must elapse before there can be

so great a change in the wild hordes who dwell around it as to make this practicable.

Astrakhan is usually spoken of as a town on the northern shore of the Caspian, at the mouth of the Volga. It is in reality situated on an island formed by a branch of that river. It cannot be said to be in a thriving condition. We learn that the cost of living in Astrakhan is so little that twenty pounds a year affords sufficient for the maintenance of a poor family. The people are contented with black bread and fruits; a large water-melon can be bought for a penny; and cucumbers, either fresh or pickled in salt, are eaten with bread. Salt fish dried in the sun forms the food for the winter season; it is first steeped in water, and then boiled, or if caviare is eaten, it is spread like butter on the bread. But it has great disadvantages as a residence; it is dusty in summer, windy in autumn, frozen up in winter, and knee-deep in mud in spring. No trees enliven the prospect, no pleasant fountains, and no pavements on the roads; forming a great contrast to Tiflis. The islands are the abode of great numbers of wild-fowl; pelicans fish on the margin of the streams, and the wild osprey hovers over the water, ready to seize on its prey.

The most interesting sight in the neighbourhood is perhaps that of a Tartar settlement of Kalmucks. General Kostenkoff, who is placed in charge of them, has taken great pains to improve them; having studied their language, written a grammar, and translated the Bible into their tongue. At present they are Buddhists, and probably possess the only idol temple left in Russia in Europe. This Sir Arthur Cunyngame was permitted to visit, as is mentioned in his work, *Travels in the Eastern Caucasus*. The priest lives in a tent similar to those inhabited by the tribe, but better furnished with mats and Persian carpets. At the back of the tent, folding-doors open, and disclose a small cupboard, which contains a small ugly wooden doll in a long silk cloak. This is worshipped many times a day, and offerings of brick-tea and beans made to it; whilst a silver lotus-flower hangs in front. Beyond is the temple, built in pagoda-form, and gaily painted. Five boys, forming the choir, squatted in the ante-room, dressed in gaudy yellow calico; the lama or priest wore a painted brass crown on his head, holding in his hand a pair of brass cymbals, and several men were playing on trumpets, flageolets, sea-shells, and drums, making a most discordant noise.

On a table in the centre, seven gods were placed, each having a small umbrella, a silver pot of silver lotus-flowers, a little cup of beans, and one of tea; curious silk flags were arranged round the table, and an embroidered canopy covered the whole. At one end of the temple, six more gilt gods each occupied his niche, dressed in yellow coats, and with the same offerings; whilst a lamp was kept constantly burning, and perfume was freely burnt. The curious invention of the prayer-wheel stood on each side of the door; they are wooden drums, about a foot in diameter, and are made to revolve by a leathern strap and crank. The prayers are carved round them, and each turn says four prayers; thus a vast amount of devotion is gone through without much labour. None but the lamas understand their books, and the people have entirely lost the clue to their religion, not knowing what they do. But they pay their contribution, and

worship, bowing their heads to the ground. About a hundred have become Christians, but this race is fast dying out.

There are considerable fishings in the Caspian; the principal fish caught being the sturgeon, from the roe of which is made the famous caviare of the Russians. There is a trade carried on among the Tartars and Circassians around the Caspian Sea of working beautiful ornaments in gold and silver. At Koorbaki, the inhabitants used to call themselves Franks, and are supposed to be the descendants of some workmen whom the Genoese republic sent out to utilise the metals found in the mines. They taught their art to the natives, and were shut up in the mountains during the advance of the Turks and Tartars, but still retain the beauty of their designs and perfection of workmanship. Shanyl turned their skill to good account in the making of guns; for whilst Europe was still fighting with the smooth-bore, his army were using excellent rifled firearms. They also coined money for him, imitating any foreign coins that came to hand and seemed convenient in size. The best workmanship in daggers and arms of all kinds sold at Tiflis, is sent there from these mountains to the Armenian shopkeepers.

The Kalmucks have at various times offered to colonise these regions, and in the last century about five hundred thousand settled near the Volga, but their freedom was taken away; so in 1771 their Khan set out on his return to Tartary with all his people, baffled the army sent in pursuit, and reached the borders of China in about eight months. They have been replaced by a few wandering and degraded tribes; and the Tcherkesses are also abandoning their mountains by thousands, rather than suffer the Russian standard to float over them. What has happened on the western side of the Caspian Sea is also going forward on the eastern; as the Muscovites advance towards Khiva, they conquer a desert; without waiting for the barrier of steel drawn around them, the nomad Turkomans have prudently taken flight. Derbend and Baku no longer offer their former splendour; and where the Argonauts went in search of the Golden Fleece, and where theologians have placed the earthly Paradise, nothing is to be found but arid and frightful wastes.

WOMEN'S WORK ABROAD.

DURING the last fifty years, the establishment of large manufactories, and the use of the steam-engine, have wholly changed the conditions of trade. A beneficent genius throws bales of silk, cotton, and wool into the crowd with the utmost profusion, but perhaps the effect of this on the position of women is not always thought of. As these great centres multiply, work at home becomes more scarce and unproductive; the more easy it is to go to a mill, the more difficult it is to meet with anything that can be done in the leisure moments of housekeeping. The cause which enriches them on the one side, ruins them on the other. The spinning-wheel is silenced because the *jenny* does the work of five hundred of the old wheels in a day; the sewing-machine reduces the sempstresses to one-half. The married women are the great losers by this; they cannot, or ought not to leave their children, and yet have some time which they could employ profitably by adding to

the general earnings. A few of the old trades still remain, more particularly in France—the lace of Normandy, the gloves of Isère, embroidery and straw-plaiting in Lorraine; and of these, a short description will be given in the following paper.

There is no kind of work which is more completely or essentially feminine than that of lace; the produce of the pillow, which is above all price, and yet so poorly paid. Valenciennes has almost ceased to furnish the lace which bears its name. It is a difficult kind of work, requiring a very long apprenticeship, and wholly absorbing to the women engaged in it; whilst the payment is so small, that the industrious population of the north of France find means to occupy themselves more advantageously. It requires many months, sometimes even a year, to weave a piece of three French yards; and as the lace-maker cannot afford to wait for her wages during so long a period, it is customary for the employer to pay when a third is finished, as well as to find the thread: by which arrangement he is sometimes a loser. Thus, there are but three lace-makers left in Valenciennes: one, who makes the old and real kind, earns about a shilling a day; the other two, fabricating the sort of lace which is imitated in Belgium, receive fifteen-pence for a day of twelve hours. Arras is a centre for a large manufacture of common lace, but the women are in general poor and ignorant.

The kind called the Point d'Alençon is made under different arrangements; whilst at Valenciennes the net and the figure are carried on at the same time, the Point d'Alençon is divided into several departments. They distinguish between the tracers, the net-makers, the lace-menders, the groundwork-makers, those who work the holes and the slender cord which surrounds and strengthens the designs. An apprenticeship of three months is sufficient to learn all these varieties; and provided they do not spoil their hands by heavy work, they can attend to all the lighter cares of housekeeping, lay down the pillow and take it up again as if it were knitting. Yet tenpence a day is all they can earn; a very small number may manage to get a shilling or thirteen-pence; the outlay, however, is small for the apparatus, nothing but the pillow, the bobbins, and the pins being wanted. Sometimes the young girls work alone; sometimes they collect together to talk whilst moving their bobbins; in the evening they economise light by assembling in one workshop. It is a delicate kind of work, which gives a certain kind of elegance to those who are occupied with it, and contributes much to the comfort of the family. Those who transfer and mend old lace, form another interesting branch of the needle-women. Lace is one of the few victories of handicraft over machine work; so far, nothing but a very inferior imitation having been produced. The efforts of the minister Colbert were very great to introduce superior lace-making into France, equal to or surpassing that of Venice. He had recourse, according to the custom of the day, to making it into a privilege; he was resisted, and threatened to send a regiment against the lace-women of Alençon; now the Venetians are no longer their rivals, but they have some difficulty in keeping up with the Belgians. All the patterns are designed in Paris; but the skilful workmanship and lower wages give a superiority to Belgium.

Closely connected with lace is the embroidery of muslin and net, which employs numberless hands

in France, Switzerland, Scotland, and Ireland. The best designs are drawn in Paris, and the manufacturers in the various towns where the work is done, give out the muslin ready traced to those who live in the villages round about. The goodness of the embroidery depends upon the elegance of the design, the perfection of the work, and the fineness of the cotton employed. At the Exhibition of 1855 held in Paris, a house at Nancy sent several collars of exactly the same design, but so differently worked, that the cheapest cost three shillings, and the dearest two pounds. The Scotch and Irish work can now compete with the French, and be done more cheaply; the cotton used by the latter is generally too coarse. In Switzerland, the master furnishes the cotton; whilst the Frenchwoman buys her own, and is tempted to do her work in the quickest manner; she never knows her master, and having no interest in him, works without self-respect.

It is very different to this at Saint-Gall, the great centre of Swiss embroidery: the day on which the work is brought in is a festival; early in the morning the young women arrive from all parts in their Sunday attire. After attending service in the church, they collect in a large room round a long table, where each receives a glass of white wine. They begin to sing one of their melodies in parts, whilst the master goes round the table, examines the work, and pays for it. If he refuse any, and declines to take it, the dispute is decided by a syndic, who sits in the next room. When the examination is over, the head of the establishment throws a mass of embroidery patterns on the table; each girl chooses the kind she likes best; it is inscribed in her book, with the price agreed on, and the day when it is to be returned. They are very industrious; and by reason of their great frugality, are contented with very poor remuneration; and by slightly sewing their pieces of work together, can have them washed at half the cost. In Saxony, the wages are so low, that it is wonderful how the women can live upon them; in Scotland, it is said that many of the children receive only a halfpenny a day. A small number in Nancy, who can embroider coats of arms and crests, earn three shillings a day; but from ten to twenty pence is the usual wage. It is a kind of work that endangers the sight; and as fashion reigns supreme, it not unfrequently happens that a style is abandoned before the orders are completed; when the merchant profits by the smallest pretext to refuse the work from the manufacturer; and in this way the loss often falls upon the poor woman, who can scarcely buy bread and clothes.

Speaking of the graceful adornments of women which they owe to their own sex, must be included the preparation of feathers, whether of the ostrich, the marabout, the heron, the bird of Paradise, or the exquisite humming-birds; and those who try their skill on flowers, whether of paper or muslin. There is something gay and youthful in the name of florist, and nothing can exceed the beautiful productions which come from their hands; they rival those of our gardens in freshness and brilliancy. This is especially a trade of Paris: beautiful women of both hemispheres there procure the flowers with which to wreath their hair. Italy once held the first rank for artificial flowers, as it did for silks, lace, and mirrors; then Lyon succeeded to Italy; now the Parisian flora are without

a rival. Nearly six thousand workwomen live on this manufacture in that city alone. The most skilful are real artists, who study natural flowers with a love for them, and reproduce them with more fidelity than the best painters. Their wages will amount to half-a-crown a day; whilst the inferior ones do not make more than twenty-pence, even when working eleven hours. A florist may live upon this if she do not indulge in the fancy of wearing her own wreaths and going to balls.

It is a curious anomaly that the cutting of precious stones should have established itself on the summit of the Jura Mountains, at Septmoncel, where it is very largely shared in by women. Whilst the diamond is cut at Amsterdam by powerful machines, and in large workshops, as suitable to the richest jewel the earth produces, the remainder of our gems, rubies, sapphires, emeralds, aqua-marine, amethysts, opals, and the corals for children, are cut and polished in a desert by honest and indigent mountaineers. They remain faithful to the manners and customs of their forefathers, and all the riches which pass through their hands do not make them discontented with their chilly cottages and hard fare. The women make imitation gems with wonderful skill; they pierce the rubies for watch pivots, and even arrange mosaics with stones sent from Florence. Their wheel is placed near the window of the cabin; the father, mother, and children all work as they can find leisure from the necessary housekeeping cares, the wood to cut in the mountain, or the piece of land to cultivate. Those who cut the rubies earn the most, but from eightpence to fifteen-pence a day is the average remuneration.

All the civilised world which makes any pretension to elegance, follows the fashion of Paris. The ladies of New York send for their dresses from the dressmakers, their head-dresses from the florists, their jewels from the lapidaries of Paris. When the Sultan Mahmoud wished to make himself popular with the fairer sex, he gave permission to the Turkish ladies to dress in the French fashion. His son has had his rooms furnished from Paris. There may be greater skill elsewhere, but the highest taste is manifested in that city. Though the needle is not the only superiority it has above other cities, yet it will be allowed that its needlework has no rival. It is the great mart also for gloves, which are made in the country according to its caprices and models.

There are three departments in glove-making: cutting out, sewing, and finishing; that is to say, embroidering the back, making the button-hole, and setting on the button. It is the work of men to cut out the glove; but women place it on the iron hand which forms the measure, strike it with a stamp, and prepare it for the cutter. This is not difficult work; it is done by the piece, and they receive tenpence for five dozen. The sewers are less favoured; the price paid for a dozen pair of ladies' gloves with one button is three-and-nine-pence: out of this they have to pay fifty per cent. to their employer, and forty per cent. goes in silk, which they find; so that it only leaves about threepence-halfpenny a pair. If it be asked, how many pair a good workwoman can complete in one day, the answer will be: that if working for twelve hours without interruption, she may manage to get through four pair; but most of the hands only do two pair and a half. This arises from

the attention they must pay to household work. Glove-making requires the most perfect cleanliness; not only are soiled gloves returned to the sewer, but she is also obliged to pay for the leather. Four pair will thus be paid at the rate of elevenpence, from which a deduction must be made for lights; two and a half, about eightpence-halfpenny. The wages are still lower in Aveyron and Haute-Marne; but in the department of Isère, this trade occupies no less than twelve thousand women, representing a value of sixteen million francs. The manufactory at Grenoble employs twelve hundred cutters-out, making five hundred and forty thousand dozen.

Those who work the back of the glove and finish it off are better paid; seven-and-sixpence is given for a dozen, but then the silk is not found. It requires six or seven hours to make a pair of embroidered gloves; supposing she does a pair and a half in a day, she will not earn that sum in a week. At this work, a woman must sew regularly, and have neither children nor many household matters to distract her attention, as it requires great nicety and skill. In Paris, the work is done at the workshop of the maker, where it can be better performed, and the highest class of embroiderers obtain there about twelve shillings a dozen.

Women are much employed in the works of marble-cutters; they also take their part as gilders of wood, mounters and varnishers of bronze, pewterers, embossers, varnished iron-plate makers, jewellers' work, and gold-beaters. Their part of the trade is not fatiguing, and pays well; everything depends on the rapidity with which they work. A clever woman can earn three-and-sixpence a day, whilst another will not make more than tenpence; then they feel discouraged, and turn to some other business. The piercers finish ornaments in copper, bronze, or more precious metals; fashion, which is at once the idol of women and their implacable enemy, pursues them even here, for fewer of these are now made than in the beginning of the century. It is a kind of work in which men do not succeed so well as women: those things which demand patience, quickness of hand, and precision, seem made for them; thus, in Switzerland and many parts of Germany, they excel in preparing parts of watches, spectacle and watch glasses; but in Paris they are very little employed on them, though it is well paid.

It has been thought that women were highly fitted to succeed in making designs, and some years ago the manufacturers of Lyon were willing to open the way for their learning to draw patterns for figured materials. It is women, they argued, that wear the most beautiful articles of this kind; they should be the best judges of the effect produced; and it appeared natural for them to direct the line to be pursued. The idea was commercially correct, but not in a psychological point of view. Women have little imagination, or at least they have only that kind which recalls and vividly represents the objects they have seen. They cannot create, but they reproduce marvellously; they are copyists of the first class. No woman will ever write a good comedy, yet they are unequalled as comedians. They are much employed in work that is only colouring; and as artists, paint china and fans. A few have learned wood-engraving, and the small number who have devoted themselves to it can easily earn between four and five shillings a day.

The occupations already named are generally carried on in particular localities; the neighbourhood of a manufactory or a trade which has established itself in a town, develops the inclinations and tastes of the people; but there are two which are found everywhere, and are always necessary—namely, washing and plain sewing. The former has kept up something of its old corporate customs in Paris; every year, on the Thursday of Mid-Lent, the washerwomen elect a queen, an honour as onerous as it is ephemeral. On this day hundreds of cabs take all the washerwomen of the villages round to Paris, dressed in fancy dresses as marchionesses and waiting-maids. A legion of water-carriers, somewhat excited with wine, and bedizened with rosettes of many-coloured ribbons, are their devoted attendants; and in the evening, the washing-boats on the Seine are transformed into ballrooms. On the Friday morning, they quietly take up their iron again.

They are divided into two separate bodies—the washers and the ironers: the work of the former is much the harder; they receive about two shillings from the mistress who employs them for a day of fourteen hours, allowing an hour and a half for meals, and a glass of brandy is given to them every morning. Those who iron are more skilful; they have to submit to a long apprenticeship, as it requires at least two years' learning to satisfy the requirements of the Parisian ladies. One particularity of this trade is, that the workers never attach themselves to one mistress. There are a certain number of places in Paris where they go every morning, and the mistresses hire them for the day.

The pasting of bags, making of handboxes, and all the varieties of cardboard and paper articles, are done by women; the bookbinders employ many for folding, arranging, and stitching the sheets. In the paper warehouses, they look over the reams to see the defects, remove the spots, and count them into smaller packets. Women also work in the printing-offices, and make good compositors, requiring exactness and handiness; but it is fatiguing, because they must stand, and the sight is liable to injury. Not only are many confectioners; but there is a higher class who prepare syrups and make bonbons, then ornament them for sale, wrap them in seductive envelopes, cover them with spangles, gold-paper, and rosettes. There are some whose whole time is passed in gumming coloured paper on myriads of miniature pieces of furniture for dolls' houses. All this is done by the fairy fingers of the Parisian with infinite taste. The poor creatures who make the wreaths of everlasting flowers and of horn shavings, used so largely in the cemeteries, can scarcely earn enough to keep them alive.

To sum up the whole: it is only talent that is paid well for hand-work. Strength in men is always valuable; a woman does not possess that, and as regards both, the steam-engine has depreciated its value; work without either talent or strength can only find a living in the manufactories. Those who have visited the miserable garrets and cabins where these poor people live, can never cease to wonder at and admire their honesty. In the cottages of the Jura, where bread often falls short, and rubies and emeralds lie on the table; in the silk-weavers' rooms at Lyon, where broadened satin spreads its brilliant colours in the loom; in

the cold damp attics of Paris, where the needle-woman stitches from morning to night, we may read a lesson how to bear misery and submission to a hard destiny with fortitude.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER IX.—THE THREE MONTHS' BILL.

LATE one afternoon, when John Milbank was closing his desk at the office, the day's work being done, word was brought that a stranger wished to see him. 'Shew him up,' said John mechanically. He was not so eager to do business as he had been; first, because his mind was engrossed with another matter (in two months, or less, Maggie would be lost to him for ever; for it was not likely that Richard would delay his marriage one day beyond the limit imposed by his uncle's will); secondly, because, while his brother remained his partner, a continuous drain upon the resources of the firm, it was hopeless to push its interests.

There entered to him a man with a gray head and beard, but thickly built, and with no trace of age in his gait or bearing. His dark and piercing eyes had a furtive look, and in a tone which was not altogether unfamiliar to John, he asked to have a few words with him in private.

John was not suspicious, and fear was unknown to him; still, it was a comfort to reflect that a large sum of money which had been in the office strong-box that morning was now lying safe at the banker's. It was not business gains—far from it: he had just disposed of the proceeds of a certain property at a dead loss, and which his brother's expenditure had compelled him to realise.

'We are quite private here, sir, and you need not fear interruption,' was his quiet reply.

'I am not a man of business,' observed the stranger, 'and therefore you must forgive me, if I am out of order in what I am about to ask you. It may be an impertinence, in which case the personal interest I have in the question must plead my excuse.' Where was it that John had heard this specious yet unconvincing tongue before? a tongue that seemed to require schooling to be decent, and to have had infinite pains taken with it, in the way of butter, to smooth off its rough edge.

'I am not easily offended, sir,' said John, eyeing his visitor very narrowly, 'where at least no offence is meant.'

'Then may I ask you, whether you have a certain bill out—a bill for a thousand pounds at three months' date from yesterday?'

John was like a rock as to his limbs, but he felt his heart fail within him. He knew of no such bill, but it was possible that his reckless brother might have drawn it on the house without his knowledge. If it was so, and he should honour it, the sacrifice he had just made for the sake of ready-money, for the carrying on of his trade, would go for nothing. If he did not honour it, disgrace would befall Richard, and alas, on her who would then be one with him, before their honeymoon was over. Their honeymoon? Why, had he not

consented to Richard's proposal at first, and let them marry? The agony that he now endured would have then been over long ago, the wound in his heart might have even cicatrised, and he would have been spared these many months of meagre hope, that were now flickering out to leave him in black despair. Moreover, he would have escaped the material losses which Richard's conduct (and his own thankless leniency) had brought upon him, and which, if the man spoke truth, were now about to culminate in what was almost ruin.

'A bill at three months, for a thousand pounds,' said John quietly. 'We may have such a bill out; but I should not gratify the curiosity of a stranger.'

'May have? Why, the bill is accepted by yourself,' broke in the other coarsely.

'I know him now,' whispered John to himself. 'There is some devil's work afoot, then.' Though the sweat was on his brow, his face was calm; his heart, though sick and weary, was resolute: whoever's foot should be placed upon his neck, he swore it should not be this man's foot.

'Let me look at the bill,' said he quietly.

'Look at it, sir? What for? You have not so many thousand-pound bills out, I conclude, as not to be able to say "Yes" or "No" to my first question. Look at it? Well, so you shall, but not too close. I am not going to risk your snatching it out of my hand and throwing it into the fire.'

In his utter contempt and loathing of this man, John Milbank smiled. 'What dull villain must such wretches be, to suppose honest men are like themselves,' thought he.

'Why, you don't mean to say it's all right?' cried his visitor, encouraged by John's quiet, which contrasted strangely with his own vehemence and indignation. 'When a man has given money down for a thing like this?'

'Did you give money down, sir?'

'Well, yes, I did; some money. There was value received, if you mean that. And if he'd tricked me—if this, I say, was waste-paper, well, I'd hang him. By Heaven, I would!'

'Whom would you hang?'

'Never mind who; the dog who gave it me. His name is not here; this is your name. You know your handwriting, I suppose.' He held a slip of paper out at arm's-length, which John regarded attentively. 'John Milbank: that is plain enough, sir,' he continued. 'Is that worth a thousand pounds or not?'

'It is certainly not worth a thousand pounds.'

'Then your brother shall lodge in jail to-night, as sure as his name is Richard.'

'Or as yours is Dennis Blake.'

'Well, what if it is? I came here thus disguised not for my own sake.'

'Of course, not; it was for the sake of the money. If you found the bill all right, you would have gone away without your dear friend knowing that you had entertained the least suspicion of him. As it happens, you have made a slight mistake. The handwriting is my own.'

'Then how can the bill be valueless? You don't mean to tell me that you are stumped out—bankrupt? The unprincipled villain! And he has got two hundred pounds of mine, unless he has lost it this afternoon. He shall disgorge them, or—'

'One moment, Mr Blake,' for the visitor had snatched up his hat, and was already at the door. 'Business is not conducted quite so quickly as a game at short-whist. You jump too much at conclusions. I never said the bill was worth nothing; I only said it was not worth a thousand pounds. You will discover that yourself when you try to discount it. The bank is shut for to-day; but I will give you a cheque for the same money as it would fetch, if you want to get rid of the bill.'

'I very much want to get rid of it,' answered Blake frankly. 'I am all for ready-money transactions. It was only because your brother was my friend, you see.'—

'I quite see, Mr Blake,' interrupted John frigidly. 'You would make, I am sure, any sacrifice to friendship.'

'Well, I would go as far as most, that I will say. But when your brother said: "Now, that bill must not be presented till it comes due," and I knew that in a month or two he might be across seas with his young woman, that, of course, rather aroused my suspicions. But since you have chosen to settle the matter yourself, there can be no harm in that; can there? I have not broken my word to him, I mean, or behaved otherwise than as a man of honour.'

'As to that, I am no judge, sir,' answered John. 'To me, this matter is a mere business transaction.'

'Just so, with no obligation on either side. And Richard need know nothing about it, need he? Good afternoon, Mr Milbank, and thank you.'

'You have no more bills of mine about you, I suppose?' inquired John imperturbably.

'No, indeed; not at present, that is. I wish I had. Good afternoon, sir.'

And John was left alone, with the bill in his hand. It was growing dark by this time, and he lit the gas, and held the document against the light. It was an ordinary three months' bill, drawn by Richard, and accepted by himself, and, to all appearance, in his own handwriting: nobody but himself could have detected that it was a forgery. Nor, indeed, could he have detected it, save that he knew he had never signed it. To gain possession of that paper had cost him near a thousand pounds, which he could ill spare, and yet his eyes flashed with pleasure, and his face flushed with triumph, as he looked at it.

'He shall not have her now!' cried he; 'I will send him to jail rather with my own hands.'

CHAPTER X.—THE LAST FAREWELL.

Richard had no guests at Rosebank that night, but was roystering elsewhere, and, as usual, did not return until the small-hours. What was not so usual was, that he came home quite sober, and when he saw his brother in the parlour sitting up for him, he turned suddenly grave.

'What! not abed yet, John?' said he, astonished; then falling into his ordinary mocking style, 'or is it that you have taken to rise an hour earlier? We have long ceased to eat with one another, and now it seems one must be up and about while the other sleeps.'

'I have not been to bed, Richard; I have been waiting here these many hours to speak with you.'

'That's a pity; if you had sent to old Robert's,

you would have found me any time since dinner. I wish to Heaven you had.'

'You have lost your two hundred pounds, then, I conclude?'

'What two hundred pounds?' stammered Richard, setting down the candle he had been about to light, and sinking into a chair. The gas shone full upon his face, and John noticed, for the first time, how much it had lost of health as well as beauty. It could not be said of Richard that he had been no one's enemy but his own; but he had been his own enemy, and would one day slay himself, that was certain. What a beautiful boy he had been! How generous, after his lavish fashion, and when he himself had had all he needed; and how their dead mother had loved him! Young as John was when she died—a year younger than Richard—such was her confidence in the one, such was her love for the other, that it was to the younger's care that she had commended the elder. 'You have the sense and the prudence, John; and when the time comes to help poor Dick, think of me,' she had said, 'and do it.'

It was ten years ago since they had been uttered, yet he remembered his mother's words as though they had been spoken yesterday, and saw her once more, thin and gray, but still very comely, with her wasted hand—through which the sun seemed to shine—lying lovingly on his own. She was the only woman that had ever loved him, and even she had preferred his brother; but he was used even then to that.

'The two hundred pounds that Blake gave you in exchange for that forged bill, I mean,' said John, not menacingly, but in a grave accusing tone.

'It is a lie,' said Richard sullenly.

'What is a lie? That Blake gave you so much back out of a thousand pounds? As for the bill, I have seen it with my own eyes.'

Richard groaned, and his face fell forward into his hands upon the table, as though a bullet had pierced him.

'Listen to me, Richard. Hours ago, when this thing was first shewn to me, I felt very hard towards you. This evil deed was but the climax of a series of ill turns that you had done me, not one of which I had provoked. I have given up everything to you that you have asked, and more; I have stripped myself bare to supply you, not with necessities, but with superfluities of all kinds. This last act of yours went nigh to ruin me, as indeed it still does. A great temptation seized upon me; never mind what. I have had many hours of thought since, and it is over now. Only, you shall not stay here—in England. You must go.'

'Must is a hard word, Brother,' said Richard, looking up with a fierce scowl.

'The time has gone by for soft ones, Richard.' His voice trembled, but not with tenderness. It had suddenly, and for the first time, struck him that, by avowing to Blake that he had put his own name to the bill, he had placed it out of his power to proclaim it a forgery. Should Richard discover this, he would really have no hold upon him at all. How foolish had he been to buy back that piece of paper, since only while it remained in its late owner's hands could it be held over Richard in terror!

'And suppose I said I would not budge, Brother John, what would you do then?'

'Do not ask me. You know what I *could* do. Or, rather, let me say what Dennis Blake—your bosom friend—*could* do, ay, and *would*—for he told me so, in case he should discover you had forged my name.'

'And has he discovered it?' inquired Richard quickly.

'Not yet. It lies with me whether he will do that or not.'

'I see. He came to you, the scoundrel! to find that out, and you gave him some evasive answer. He suspects already, in fact, that I forged the bill, but believes that you will buy it of him, and hush up the matter.'

'Yes, for the present it is worth his while to be silent. But if the base suspicion makes him furious, you may judge what his wrath would be, what sort of mercy you may expect from him if it should be realised.'

John could hardly believe his ears, when here Richard burst out into loud laughter. 'Denny would be pretty mad, that's true; he don't like to lose money at any time, not even what has been other people's, and some of this was *lent* money. I have often thought how long his face would have looked this day three months, when he found that bill waste paper, and Richard Milbank over the seas!'

John stood regarding him with an expression of wonder, pity, and even terror. 'Can this be our mother's son?' 'Thank Heaven, she did not live to see him thus,' was what he was thinking.

'It was a scurvy trick, I own,' continued the other, as if in answer to this look; 'but Denny is a scurvy fellow. I have lost a fortune to him at one thing and another, and he has been always hard upon me; and always ready with his "But I have lost to others, Dick," as an excuse for being hard; though he does lose heavily too, sometimes, I am glad to say. You see, I didn't mean to take you in, John, but only him. You would have been none the worse, since, of course, when the bill came due, it would have been dishonoured.'

'The bill!' exclaimed John in agony: 'do you think only of the bill?'

'Well, I thought that would be your own way of looking at it, being a man of business,' was the other's cool reply. 'As for *my* dishonour, I should have been too far away by that time for any one in Hilton to see me blush.'

'I pray you, say no more, Richard. I will pay this thousand pounds, upon condition that you leave this place at once—to-morrow. It will almost ruin me. You are like one who, passing by the work of some toilsome insect, brushes down with wilful foot, in a single instant, what has cost it months of labour to erect.'

'Well, I say again that I didn't mean to hurt you,' returned Richard doggedly. 'I'll leave the country, of course, since you insist upon it; but you must give a fellow a little time—and a little money.'

'Money; yes,' returned John; 'I have still a hundred pounds.'

'Beyond the thousand?' interrupted Richard practically.

'Yes; I sold out all I had but yesterday, and you shall have it to the last shilling. But as to time, I will not give you a day, not an hour. (If he should see Blake, thought John, and learn that I have

bought the bill—that the danger is over—this mill-stone will be about my neck for ever. He must depart at once.)'

'That is sharp work, Brother John; remember, there is Maggie.'

As if he did not remember! as if that had not been the temptation against which he had been battling for the last eight hours in the solitary night! Should he forbid him to take Maggie with him, to marry her at all, on pain of being proclaimed a felon? Or should he permit him to escape with her?—the richest prize that the best of men could win.

'I have thought of that, Richard,' said he, with icy calm. 'She shall follow you to some other town, with her father; and after having become your wife, you shall take her with you beyond seas. But if you have a grain of feeling left, have compassion upon her, brother. Let this be the last of your evil deeds. Do not drag her down with yourself into the gulf of shame and ruin. You talked just now of having escaped beyond the reach of dishonour; you might have done so, but not she; and she would have withered at the touch of it. Imagine what Maggie Thorne would have felt, had she learned, though it were ten thousand leagues from hence, that she was the wife of a felon—of a forger!' He spoke with uncommon vehemence, and yet with a tender entreaty in his tone that was inexpressibly touching. He had given up all he had of worldly goods to benefit this man, but that was nothing in his eyes to what he was giving him now: not that it was his own to give, but still it was what his heart clung to, as a mother to her babe; and he was renouncing such claim to it as he had in favour of this good-for-nothing, and with it all his cherished hopes and dreams of happiness.

'Maggie ought to be greatly beholden to you,' was Richard's chilling reply. 'I daresay I shall not be a husband worthy of her; not such a model of propriety as you would have been, for instance, if her fancy had chimed with yours; but as to this particular peccadillo of the bill, it would be very unreasonable in her to reproach me with it, since, in point of fact, it was she that did it.'

'She that did it!' John leaped from his chair, and uttered the first oath that had ever escaped his lips. 'She forge that bill, and bring disgrace upon yourself, and her, and me, and on her brother! Oh, shameless liar!'

'I said nothing about "bringing disgrace,"' was the sullen reply. 'She knew nothing of that, of course, nor, indeed, of what she was doing.'

'Go on,' said John, in a hoarse voice, and gripping the table with both his hands. 'How was it?'

'Well, it was very simple. I made up my mind to do the trick, and took the bill to her one morning. We talked of this and that, and presently I brought the subject up of her own accomplishments: her drawing, painting, writing—she can copy anything, you know, as like as life.'

'I know,' groaned John.

'Well, then, to please me, she began to imitate the handwriting of her friends: old Lynch's and his wife's; her father's; yours—and when she came to yours, I said: "Let's puzzle John," and out I slipped the bill, and she signed *that*, without even asking what it was.'

'Richard, I'll hang you.'

'Hands off!' cried Richard, for John had seized him by the collar, 'or I shall hang for taking your life. Aro you mad? Hands off! I say.'

'If you leave the house without having copied the letter I have drawn up here,' cried John, almost inarticulate with rage, 'it shall be to go to jail; I swear it.'

'What letter?'

'This.' He pushed a sheet of ordinary note-paper before him, with trembling hands. 'You undertake, for a certain sum of money—all I have—to leave this town to-morrow, and England in a month. To spare you—for I thought to spare you *then*—I have written nothing about the bill. You are going of your own free-will, you say, to seek your fortune elsewhere. I find this on my table in the morning, by way of farewell.'

'Pooh, pooh; you need not put yourself in such a fury. I had agreed to that before.'

'Not all of it. You will now depart *alone*.'

'What! without Maggie? Never!'

'We shall see. To-morrow, you will spend in jail; and when the assizes come, you will be tried, and sentenced to twenty years of penal servitude, which will all be passed without Maggie.'

'Jack, you dare not do it. What! not buy the bill up when you have the money, and your brother's fate depends upon it? And then to let it all come out in court that Maggie forged the bill! You dare not do it, John, for her sake.'

'By Heaven, I dare, though; and I will. What is one day's torture, or a week's, to a whole lifetime of disgrace and misery that she must needs endure with you! Is any hope of reformation left in one who can make a cat's-paw of the woman he loves, can cause her innocent hand to do his wicked work! No; vile and heartless traitor, you would be her ruin. Sit down, and write, I say; beneath this very roof, you once compelled a sick and dying man to write for *you*; now write for *me*, or rot in prison.'

Richard took the pen, overmastered quite by the other's vehement resolve. For the present at least he felt that he was beaten; put under foot by the man on whom he had himself so often trodden. How he hated John, and Dennis Blake, and even Maggie herself, now that he was not to have her for his own! 'Well,' said he sullenly, 'I have written it.'

John took the paper, examined it carefully, then placed it in his pocket-book. 'And now,' said he, 'take this cheque, almost the last shilling that I have to draw, and the last you will ever see of mine. It is on our London bank, so that there is no need to wait at Hilston to cash it. Pack up to-night: take all you please; but leave this house at dawn, and never let me see your handsome, hateful face again—you!—he looked at him for a moment with unutterable scorn and loathing, then added—'you jail-bird.'

'A pretty farewell to your own flesh and blood,' remarked Richard grimly.

'You are not my flesh and blood, nor any man's,' answered John, turning fiercely round with his hand upon the door. 'The villain who would make a thief of an innocent girl whom he pretends to love, it were flattery to call a man. I say again, "jail-bird." And with that he closed the door behind him, and so they parted.

Richard did not go up-stairs, but after a moment's thought, snatched up his hat, and, late as it was, left the house, and started at a quick pace towards the town.

CURIOSITIES OF MEMORY.

'MEMORY,' says a recent writer on mental physiology, 'is the organic registration of the effects of impressions.' This definition has at all events the merit of greatly extending the ordinary meaning of the term, and of indicating the relations of the retentive mental faculty in the system of nature. In this view, every organ of plant or animal has a memory. The lopped tree, the wounded limb, the face marked by the virus of small-pox, all have a memory, and one as retentive as that of the brain-cells, to the record of whose marvellously delicate modifications we generally, and properly enough, limit the name. The characters in which all organic changes are written may be said to be indelible. The scar of a deep wound, though it may become less marked with age, is never effaced. Similarly, in a brain not disorganised by injury or disease, the records of memory are stereotyped. To recall them to consciousness may be wholly beyond our power; we may think that they are lost to us for ever, till something occurs to alter to an inappreciable degree the minute nerve-cells, and thus to tear off the veil which hid from us the thoughts and events of the past.

It is well known that, in the agony of drowning, the veil is sometimes stripped off the tablets of memory, and the inscriptions again made legible to consciousness. In the following case, narrated by Oliver Wendell Holmes, the revival of the impression led to a very practical result. A held a bond against B. for several hundred dollars. When it became due, he searched for it, but could not find it. He told the facts to B. who denied having given the bond, and intimated a fraudulent design on the part of A. who was compelled to submit to the loss and the charge against him. Years afterwards, B. was bathing in Charles River, when he was seized with cramp and nearly drowned. On coming to his senses, he went to his book-case, took out a book, and from between its leaves took out the missing bond. In the sudden picture of his entire life, the putting the bond in the book, and the book in the book-case, had been vividly represented. One's feelings of justice are only partly satisfied by learning that the bond was paid with interest. In a case mentioned by Dr Abercromby, it would be difficult to give any feasible explanation of the revival of the impression, unless on the Hibernian assumption, that a person may remember what he never knew. A boy, at the age of four, received a fracture of the skull, for which he underwent the operation of trepan. He was at the time in a state of perfect stupor, and after recovery, retained no recollection either of the accident or the operation. At the age of fifteen, during the delirium of a fever, he gave his mother a correct description of the operation, and the persons present at it, with their dress and other minute particulars. He had never alluded to it before, and no means were known by which he could have acquired a knowledge of the circumstances.

The foregoing are examples of exaltation of

memory under the conditions of injury or disease affecting the organ of thought. But these reproductions of the long vanished forms of the past not infrequently take place in perfect health. In many cases, the only thing wanted to revive an impression is some link of association, either of place or circumstance. The story of young Montague, whom a chimney-sweep had stolen, and whose aristocratic birth was at last discovered by his recognising his old nursery-room, into which he had descended, is an illustration, true to nature, of the recurrence of former impressions from associations of place. A very striking instance of the revival of an early impression, to all appearance wholly obliterated from the memory, through the person being placed in the situation which originally gave it birth, is mentioned by Dr Haslam. A lady taken to the country in the last stage of an incurable disorder, requested that her youngest child, a girl of about four years of age, might be sent for to visit her, which was accordingly done. The child remained with her mother about three days, and then returned to town. She grew up without any trace or recollection of the visit, or of her mother, or of the name of the village in which she had last seen her. After growing up to maturity, she had occasion, along with Dr Haslam, who had attended her mother in her last illness, to visit the house in which her mother died, without knowing it to have been so. On entering the room where her mother had been confined, her eye anxiously traversed the apartment, and she said: 'I have been here before; the prospect from the window is quite familiar to me, and I remember that in this part of the room there was a bed, and a sick lady, who kissed me, and wept.' An illustration from the realm of fiction will occur to the reader in the case of Bertram in *Guy Mannering*. His return to the scenes of his childhood awakens a train of reminiscences which conduce to the development of his history and legitimate claims. But there are other associations equally powerful with those of locality to awaken the long dormant forms of the past. A troop of cavalry which had served on the continent was disbanded in York. Sir Robert Clayton turned out the old horses in Knavesmire, to have their run for life. One day, while grazing apart from each other, a storm gathered, and when the thunder pealed, and the lightning flashed, they were seen to get together in perfect order, as if they had their old masters on their backs. The following case is hardly one of revived memory, but is given simply to illustrate the ludicrous effect of a malaprop presentation of an idea which had shortly before been strongly impressed on a mind perhaps slightly affected with post-prandial exaltation. It is related of Wharton, the Professor of Poetry in Oxford, that after partaking of a Sunday dinner with a friend, he repaired to his service at the church. On his way, he was powerfully saluted with the cry of 'Live mackerel!' During the singing of the psalm, he slumbered in the pulpit, and, on the organ ceasing, he arose, half awake, and instead of commencing the prayer, startled the congregation by giving in a loud voice a part of the cry still ringing in his ears: 'All alive, all alive, O!'

But the subject of the obliteration of the records of memory under certain conditions, is as curious as that of their unexpected revival. The two

kinds of changes are, indeed, in some cases simultaneous; while one set of impressions is recalled, another is coincidentally erased or lost. A well-known living physician not long ago recorded the case of a lady who, up to her sixteenth year, had lived in France, and spoke only French. After this, she came to England, learned the language, married an American at twenty, and for the next twenty years lived partly in America, and partly in England, speaking English habitually, French scarcely ever. She then became ill, forgot her English, and all about her married life, and if asked who she was, gave her maiden name, and mentioned, in French, the street in Paris in which she had lived as a girl. So completely had she forgotten her English, that it was necessary to change an English for a French maid. In some of the cases of partial loss of memory from injury or disease of the brain, it would be very puzzling to account satisfactorily for the nature and the very limited extent of the loss. Thus, a fever obliterated from the memory of a learned man the letter 'F,' without apparently committing any other injury. A soldier who had undergone the operation of trepan, and lost a slice of brain-matter, lost with it the power to recall the numbers '6' and '7,' and was only able to fix them in his mind by laboriously learning them like a child. Sir Benjamin Brodie mentions the case of a groom in the service of George IV. who was kicked by a vicious horse while he was in the act of cleaning it. The groom did not fall, nor was he at all stunned or insensible; but he entirely forgot what he had been doing at the time the blow was inflicted. There was an interval of time blotted out, as it were, from his recollection. He inferred, in fact, that during that period he had been asleep. A young lady who had been present at a catastrophe in Scotland in which many persons were killed by the fall of the gallery of a church, escaped without injury, but with the complete loss of the recollection of any of the circumstances; and this extended not only to the accident, but to everything that had occurred to her a certain time before going to the church. A gentleman mentioned by Dr Beattie lost his knowledge of Greek from a blow on the head, whilst his other mental stores were left intact. Sometimes, however, disease appears to make a clean sweep of all acquired knowledge of every kind. The following extraordinary case was published in an American medical work many years ago. The patient was a clergyman, who, at the termination of a severe illness, lost the recollection of everything, even the names of the most common objects. When his health was restored, he began to acquire knowledge just as a child does. After learning the names of objects, he was taught to read, and after this began to learn the Latin language. He had made considerable progress, when, one day, in reading his lesson with his brother, who was his teacher, he suddenly stopped, and put his hands to his head. Being asked why he did so, he replied: 'I feel a peculiar sensation in my head; and now it appears to me that I knew all this before.' From that time, he rapidly recovered his faculties. It is recorded by Ballantyne of Sir Walter Scott, that, when the *Bride of Lammermoor* in its printed form was submitted to him after an illness, he did not recognise as his own one single incident, character, or conversation it contained; yet the original tradition was perfect

in his mind. When Mrs Arkwright sang some verses of Sir Walter's one evening at Lord Francis Egerton's, the author of them whispered to Lockhart: 'Capital words. Whose are they? Byron's, I suppose; but I don't remember them.' For a voluminous author to forget some of his own writings does not appear so remarkable; but one can hardly conceive of a person failing to recollect his own name; but cases are on record of this *ne plus ultra* of forgetfulness. A man of not very strong intellect, who held an office the sole duty of which consisted in signing his own name to a number of papers, had one day so much business of this kind to do that at last he was incapable of recollecting the word he ought to sign. A writer of the last century relates that Mr Von B——, envoy at St Petersburg, went one morning to pay a number of visits. Among other houses at which he called there was one where the servants did not know him, and consequently he was under the necessity of giving in his name; but this he found he had entirely forgotten. Turning round to a gentleman who accompanied him, he said with much earnestness: 'For God's sake, tell me who I am!' This odd request excited laughter, but he insisted on being answered, adding, that he had entirely forgotten his name.

The power to recall past impressions is perhaps more than any other mental faculty dependent on the physical condition of the body. Sir Benjamin Brodie, in view of this fact, conceived it possible by a series of accurate observations, to discover the temperament or physical conditions most favourable to memory. Some of the conditions conducive to the exercise of the recollective faculty are obvious enough. Violent action is generally inimical to it. To convince one's self of this, it is only necessary for a person to try to recall a faded impression while running rapidly. Excessive fatigue is equally incompatible with good powers of recollection. Sir Henry Holland mentions that he descended on the same day two very deep mines in the Harz Mountains, remaining some hours underground in each, and at the end was exhausted both from fatigue and hunger. 'I then felt,' says he, 'the utter impossibility of talking longer with the German inspector who accompanied me. Every German word and phrase deserted my recollection, and it was not till I had taken food and wine, and been some time at rest, that I regained them.' But in addition to the physical conditions of the recollective faculty, there are some mental ones of equal importance. Perhaps the foremost of these is indicated in what Sir Philip Warwick says of Lord Strafford: 'His memory was great, and he made it greater by confiding in it.' There is perhaps nothing which more surely leads to failure of memory than an unreasonable distrust of it. The doubt of success begets mental distraction, and thus the mind loses its hold of these links of association on which recollection depends. Sir Walter Scott had an absolute faith in his power of memory in the morning, when his brain had been refreshed by sleep. He states in his diary, that during composition, when he found himself at a loss, he would say; 'Never mind; we shall have it all at seven o'clock to-morrow morning.'

There is a curious illusion or phantasm of memory which most persons experience some time or other in their lives, the cause of which is not very easily explained. A person goes into a

company, and the thought comes over him that the entire surroundings are familiar to him. He has the feeling that the exact situation in which he finds himself existed at some former time. Many have adduced this as an evidence of a former state of existence; and from it a recent writer more cautiously infers 'that there is more in the memory than we take cognisance of.' But it was long ago pointed out by a German philosopher that this felt identity with a past scene extends to minute details; and it could hardly be that the same persons could have had an ante-mundane meeting, say at a tea-party, in a drawing-room, in frock-coats, kid gloves, lace dresses, &c. We conclude this somewhat discreditable paper by giving an example, from a medical writer, of what may be called *perverted* memory, as a consequence of inebriety, which must have been attended with considerable inconvenience to one of the parties concerned. A gentleman who was in the habit of indulging in potations 'pottle deep,' at a certain stage used to lose all recollection of having drunk any liquor himself, but imagined that his family had done so freely. He referred his own sensations to those about him, and on going home, he always insisted on undressing, and putting his family to bed, declaring that they were all too drunk to do so for themselves.

ODDS AND ENDS:

FROM DR ROBERT CHAMBERS'S SCRAP-BOOK.

SOCIAL INTERCOURSE.—In this matter there is apparently something wrong; perhaps too much expense, too much finery, too much eating and drinking, too much driving on to late hours—all for the sake of being fashionable. The following has come within my own knowledge. Mr Martin, the eminent painter, was accustomed at one time to have conversaziones at his house, at which there never was any person who was not eminent in some department of literature or art. They generally consisted of about seventy persons, and they were remarkable for their pleasant character. One thing also remarkable was, that there was extremely little eating and drinking at them. At length, it began to be thought that men should be allowed to bring their wives, and that, in the few instances where married women of eminence had been admitted, they should be at liberty to bring their husbands. In a little while after, the wives of the literati and artists pleaded for permission to bring with them female friends who happened to be staying with them. Thus a large infusion of commonplace mortals took place. The consequence was that the meetings fell off very much in attractiveness, and that a great deal of more eating and drinking was observed. So much was the latter circumstance remarked, that the host found it necessary to give up the use of wine; then he gave up everything like supper. The commonplace people being thus disgusted, and the *élite* having meanwhile ceased to feel any pleasure in attending, these conversaziones were at last entirely given up, after they had run with more or less success for about six years.—On the same

subject, I am tempted to make the following quotation from *Bentley's Miscellany*: 'Why London is unsocial it is difficult to say, though everybody says it. Every one pines for visiting on easy terms, but no one makes any attempt to facilitate the matter. Invitations at a month's end seem like insults upon our sublunary state, our uncertain health, &c.; but, nevertheless, who likes unexpected visits? Extempore tea-drinking is esteemed a liberty; and if you venture upon it, the whole of the visit is apt to be occupied in reflections whether or not it really is acceptable. A vain, though well-meant attempt was made last season to revive the simple, enjoyable supper at nine o'clock; but the Londoners would not understand it. They have no notion of anything that is not in every way full dressed. With all our luxuries, the luxury of easy visiting is not to be ours; we must be half ruined to be in society at all; and we are growing obtuse to the real vulgarity of all the display and expense which we thrust upon our tables, and mingle with our nocturnal meetings.'

LOUIS-PHILIPPE.—It may not be generally known that Louis-Philippe, king of the French, was in his early life constituted a burgher of one of the towns in Scotland. Such seems to have been the case, if there be any truth in the following, which appears in a Perth newspaper: 'When the Earl of Kinnoul was, last summer, in Paris, one day when dining at the Tuileries, His Majesty referred to Perth and its scenery, as well as that of the neighbourhood; and added he felt particularly interested in all which related to it, being himself a citizen of the place. Upon His Lordship expressing surprise at the announcement, His Majesty added: "Yes; and the freedom was conferred upon me at Dupplin Castle, when a guest of your late noble father." Louis-Philippe then detailed the whole scene—the arrival of the lord-provost, with the burgher-ticket and the council's address; and the speeches which followed on both sides—and added that such honours were at that time (about the beginning of the century) not so numerous with him, and the occasion had made no slight impression on his memory, as was evinced in the circumstantiality with which the whole was detailed.'

IGNORANCE OF COLLEGIANS.—At the meeting of the British Association at Cambridge (June 1845), Mr Goadby, who had his beautiful anatomisations of the lower animals exhibited at the Model Room, was greatly struck by the appearance of ignorance in the gowmsmen, as shewn in the remarks which they made and the questions they asked. One, who had a lady on his arm, told her that these were *models*. Another, similarly attended, apparently wishing to avoid troublesome questions, said to her very oracularly: 'Oh, this is all anatomy.' A third collegian inquired who made these things? 'The glasses, do you mean?' inquired Mr Goadby. 'No; the things in the glasses.' 'The same that made you,' was the reply. Several men better informed, spoke of the objects comprehensively as insects, though only a portion of them were of that class in the animal kingdom. None of these men had ever heard of such a thing as a mollusc, or an echinoderm. Altogether, Mr G. thinks he never shewed his preparations to a more ignorant set of visitors than the gowmsmen of Cambridge.

As an illustration of the benefit that might be

derived from the introduction of natural history into schools—Mr Goadby was once lecturing on his preparations at Cheltenham, when he had amongst his auditors Lord M—— of the Irish peerage. Lord M—— is a middle-aged man, congenitally lame, inasmuch as to be dependent on others for locomotion. Possessing an active mind, and unable to take the amusements of other men of his order, he has given his mind a good deal to study, but not wholly, for the gaming-table had unfortunately asserted a strong dominion over him, and he had thus lost almost the whole of his patrimonial property. This clever nobleman, who was loved by everybody for his amiable disposition, seemed exceedingly interested in the lecture, and after it was over, he lingered an hour, inspecting and inquiring into the peculiarities of the animals which formed the subject of it. At last, he burst out with an exclamation: 'If I had been taught such things in my youth—what it would have been for me!' implying that the having such an amusement for his leisure hours would have saved him from those wretched pursuits in which he had found excitement, and which had proved his ruin. [Since the foregoing was written, lectures on physical science have been instituted at Cambridge; though attendance on them is, we believe, not obligatory.]

FRANKNESS.—A rude frankness is not one of the failings of society in our age. If you have done anything, or taken any course which you suspect to be imprudent, or imagine the world may think so, be assured the latter is the case if you never hear any one allude to the subject. Or, if any silly person has been speaking disparagingly of you, and you hear reports of it in various quarters, you may equally be certain that no credence has been given to it, for, had the contrary been the case, undoubtedly no word of it would ever have reached you. Plainness of speech must have fled to some region at a different stage of civilisation than ours. In so far as this arises from delicacy of feeling, let us be thankful.

EARLY SPRING.

Now Nature wakes from out her wintry trance,
Rejoiced that Winter's gone, and Spring's at hand—
Fair, blue-eyed Spring, who, with a proud advance,
Hath marched into the land.

Strangely the sky hath softened, like the eyes
Of some coy maiden just begun to love;
The woods are starred with flow'rets, as the skies
Are starred at nights above.

There drifts of lilies mimic winter's snows,
'Neath branches late by wild winds bent and riven;
And the shy hyacinth that earliest blows
Brings down the blue of heaven!

Each morn gives birth to fresh life-giving airs;
And lightly, blithely thro' through everything
All vernal impulses, all vernal stirs,
The spirit which is Spring.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.
Also sold by all Booksellers.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 533.

SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 1874.

Price 11d.

FISHING IN THE TROPICS.

IN our day the motive-power of steam has been brought to such perfection, that voyages which formerly occupied five or six weeks, may now be made in as many days, and lands and climes that fifty years ago were unknown to any but the few connected with them by trade, are now within easy reach of the tourist. Canon Kingsley's glowing descriptions of tropical scenery in the West Indies may perhaps induce others to see for themselves what he has so charmingly painted; and while enjoying the scenery, they may, if it suits their tastes, spend a few days very pleasantly in fishing-excursions about the shores, and in the channels between the island of Trinidad and the coast of Venezuela. Whaling stations were here established nearly forty years ago; and eight or ten boats leave the shore early every morning during the months of February, March, and April, in search of these monsters of the deep. Each boat is manned with five or six pullers, a harpooner and steersman, the harpooner being captain of the boat. The crews, mostly Africans or of African descent, are, as a rule, remarkable for great physical development of chest and arm. Seated in the bow, unless a whale is in sight, the harpooner may be seen bending over a lance or harpoon head, which he is whetting and oiling for future use, casting on it an almost affectionate glance, as it approaches nearer and nearer to his ideas of perfection. At other times standing with a small harpoon in his hands, he is on the look-out for an addition to his evening meal, in the shape of any fish that may pass before him.

The moment a whale is seen, either blowing or stretched on the water, the greatest excitement prevails on board. The negro is at all times easily excited, and may be excused in a case of this kind, when he sees a fish worth from a hundred to a hundred and fifty pounds sterling not far off; perhaps within a short time to be moored a lifeless mass alongside his boat. Off go the shirts of the pullers, the boat's head is turned in the direction of the whale, and with their muscular backs and

arms shining in the sun, the boat, impelled by the regular stroke of six oars, dashes in pursuit. When within fifteen or twenty feet of the whale, the harpooner drives his harpoon into the huge fish as near the head or heart as possible, and throwing over ten or fifteen fathoms of loose rope coiled in the bow, draws his long knife, and stands prepared to cut away, in case of accidents from entanglement of the rope with the clothes or limbs of any on board. The oarsmen have, meanwhile, laid in their oars, and sit ready to check the rope on one of the thwarts, as soon as this may be done without risk to the boat, or injury to the palms of their hands.

If the whale goes straight down, or 'sounds,' as they term it, rope must be allowed to run out till it takes it into its head to rise again towards the surface. When partially exhausted after its first burst, the rope is hauled in hand over hand, and the harpooner prepares his lances. A good harpooner, if he gets sufficiently near to strike the whale in some vital part, may cause it to blow blood with the first lance-thrust, and so end its struggles at once. This is, however, the exception, not the rule.

When the chase takes place within sight of those on shore, the excitement among the relations or friends of the crews knows no bounds.

The yells of delight that hail each lance-thrust, and the 'pean' that rises when the monster blows blood, echo and re-echo from the hillsides behind. Even a stranger feels the blood course more quickly through his veins as he sees the harpooner strike, and the boat almost instantly bound over the water, in obedience to the first rush of the wounded whale, then bury itself between the waves, which form like a wall on each side, leaving only the heads of the crew visible to the spectator.

The whale is now dead; the other boats coming up, assist in towing it to the station, where, as soon as daylight permits, all hands are employed, some cutting off the blubber, while others attend to the caldrons, set in a row on brickwork. The blubber, when it has passed through these caldrons, and been made to part with as much of the oil as is

possible under the circumstances, is then used for fuel. While thus employed, the different groups of workmen present a fine study for any rambling photographer who may chance to come that way. The scene is enlivened by songs, often by fighting, owing to the great facility with which rum may be obtained in exchange for fat or 'whale-beef;' and the proprietor of the station must keep a sharp look-out at this stage of the proceedings on the fleet of small canoes that crowd around ready to carry off any blubber they can lay their hands on.

In the case of a female whale, the sea is often whitened by the milk that flows while she is being cut up. Steaks cut from a young whale are not bad eating when fresh, and possess this advantage over other kinds of flesh, that they may be eaten by Roman Catholics through Lent, the whale, though inhabiting the sea, being a mammal.

Great numbers of vulture-like crows blacken the trees round the station, and regard the proceedings below with much interest, descending now and again to steal any flesh or fat they can lay their beaks on. It is often amusing to see a couple of them fighting over a long strip of beef. Having begun to swallow it at the same time at opposite ends, then perhaps having got down some five or six inches of it, each crow becomes aware of a sudden jerking sensation imparted to the meat from the other. One or other must disgorge, and then a regular fight ensues.

The fishermen of the neighbourhood cut the meat into slices, and hang it to dry for future use. After exposure to the air it becomes quite black in appearance, and very rank both in smell and taste; but for all that they seem to like it, and what is more to the purpose, get fat on it. Pigs, dogs, and cats improve the occasion, and all become quite round and sleek during the whaling season. For some days after a whale has been taken, every bush and tree near the fishermen's houses is hung with this jerked meat, rather tempting morsels for the crows that hover round ready to take advantage of every chance that may offer of filching.

When all the blubber and fat has been removed from the carcass, it is usually towed out, and allowed to drift with the current as a bait for sharks, while large canoes, fitted somewhat in the style of whale-boats, follow it, to harpoon any of these fish that may come within range. Sharking is rather good sport in itself, and is at the same time very remunerative, on account of the quantity of oil that can be obtained from the liver. The shark is killed much in the same way as the whale, being first harpooned, and then lanced till it is exhausted, after which its liver is cut out and placed in the boat. The liver is four or five feet long, and a large one will give as much as fifteen or sixteen gallons of oil. Though sharks in these parts are numerous, accidents while bathing, or even when boats are swamped at sea, are rare; and they will not touch a human being even when in the water alongside a whale that is being cut up. Several instances are well authenticated where persons have thus fallen among them, and escaped without injury; the shark, it is said, preferring the blubber and flesh of the whale to human flesh. There can be no doubt, however, that if the person thus immersed were wounded in such a manner as to cause blood to flow, sharks would eat him just as readily as they do the whale. When in great numbers, they will eat one of their own kind that

has been severely wounded, and on such occasions rush at the body so fiercely as to force it above the surface.

On one occasion, the crew of a whale-boat that had been swamped were picked up by their consort-boat, and the harpooner directed them to pull for his hat that was floating at some distance off. As he was about to pick it up, a large shark rising to the surface swallowed it, thus shewing that this fish is not at all times nice in its tastes. On one occasion, a lad saw such numbers of sharks round a carcass, that he thought he might have some sport with them, and taking with him a negro lad, proceeded in a canoe, with four or five fathoms of line. He was soon fast to a shark, and having foolishly attached the line to one of the thwarts, was almost soon upset among hundreds of other sharks. On rising to the surface, he made for the shore, but seeing that the negro boy had returned to the boat, which was now floating bottom up, he did so also, and they both got on to the keel, where they remained till rescued by the whalers ashore, who saw their predicament, and came to their aid. It was lucky for both of them that there was plenty of blubber about, or they would certainly have been taken. This man afterwards became very successful in his mode of capturing sharks. At first he used to attach the harpoon to the end of the rope; but finding that the shark, when hauled up near to the boat, sometimes bit it through, he was curious to find out how this was done. As the shark was always struck somewhere about the back, it seemed inexplicable; but he ascertained at last, that when the rope got quite taut, the shark managed to wind himself up in its coils, till he got it into his mouth, when his 'jaws, armed with three-fold fate,' soon made short work of it. He has since attached six or seven feet of chain to the end of the rope, fastening the harpoon on to the chain.

Several varieties of sharks are found in these waters, all great cowards, excepting the so-called 'Tintord,' which is quite fearless. It has fine large eyes, and its mouth is much farther forward in its head than is common with other varieties of the shark kind. Spaniards, and those of Spanish descent, are generally very fond of shark's flesh, and say that, when properly washed in lime-juice, to remove its unpleasant odour, it is a very fine dish. Some prefer it to most other kinds of fish; and on the north coast, sharks' heads may often be seen on the beaches, the body having been removed for food.

Small sharks, from three to five feet long, are often caught in seines, and require careful handling to get them out after the net has been dragged ashore. They can bend their bodies into a semicircular form, and by this means may get hold of one's leg. The most approved plan is to take firm hold just above the fork of the tail, keeping the hands well out from the body; and thus drag them to a spot where they can be conveniently despatched. Not long since, a man who was removing one from a net without this precaution, got rather a serious bite on the calf of his leg. A shark will often flap its tail after its heart has been cut out.

During the whaling season, lobster-fishing may be successfully pursued either on a calm bright morning, or by torchlight on a dark night. Two persons are required for this sport by daylight; one uses the harpoon, or dives for the lobster,

while the other pulls slowly along in water from four to fifteen feet deep. Catching fish by nets is successfully carried on along the coast of Trinidad and Venezuela. It furnishes much amusement. Seining is the most interesting of the different processes, at least to those who prefer seeing a great variety of fish, as many different kinds are at times caught in a single haul of the net; and it is curious to see how quickly the fishermen of the place, on the darkest nights, distinguish the different kinds of fish brought to land.

WRETCHED WRITERS.

THE penmanship of some people, even of good education, is execrable. It may be excused in some instances by unsteadiness of hand arising from some physical defect, but too commonly it arises from over-haste, nervousness, or utter contempt of intelligibility. To wilfully write a letter so badly that no ordinary mortal can read it, is nothing short of an impertinence. The same thing may be said of unintelligible signatures. A fantastic way of signing names is one of the most miserable of all affectations. We sometimes receive letters with a name signed like an entangled puzzle, and can only reply by cutting it out and sticking it on the back of our letter, leaving the postman to discover who is meant.

Literature past and present gives innumerable anecdotes of wretched writers. A fair correspondent of George Selwyn, who, while pleading a pain in the hand in excuse for writing more in cipher than usual, frankly confesses she never could write. Lady Susan Keck's inability to use a pen to good purpose may be accounted for by the fact, that in the days of her girlhood it was unfashionable to write plainly; it was beneath the dignity of your man of quality or your man of wit to write so as to be easily understood. Montaigne, a man of quality, and a man of wit too, owns to writing so clumsily as not to be able to read what he had written. This apparently arose as much from carelessness as from incompetence. In his impatience, he sacrificed plainness for the sake of speed; he says: 'I always write my letters post, and so precipitately, that though I write an intolerable ill hand, I rather choose to do it myself, than to employ another, for I can find none able to follow me, and never transcribe any, but have accustomed the great ones that know me to endure my blots and dashes upon paper without fold or margin.' The essayist's epistles must have strongly resembled Sam Weller's famous valentine, indited with sublime confidence in the pretty housemaid's powers of interpretation. Montaigne certainly did not libel himself, and, oddly enough, when he did employ an amanuensis, he chose as bad a writer as himself, and made matters rather worse than better. When, long after his death, the manuscript of his Italian journal was discovered in a worm-eaten coffer in the old chateau, one-third of the journal was found to be in the handwriting of the servant who acted as his secretary, and that portion was almost unintelligible, thanks to bad writing, and spelling to match.

Lord Eldon told George IV. the greatest lawyer in England could neither walk, speak, nor write. This legal luminary was Mr Bell, a cripple, who had great difficulty in putting his ideas into speech,

and had succeeded in hitting upon three different methods, all equally original, of putting them upon paper—one being intelligible to himself, but worse than Greek to his clerk; another which his clerk could, but he himself could not decipher; and a third, which neither he, his clerk, nor any one else could comprehend. It seems almost too absurd that a man should be unable to read his own writing, however bad it may be; but a printer employed in a London newspaper office tells us he has more than once applied vainly to a living novelist for an elucidation of his mysterious hieroglyphics. We daresay Dr Parr's vanity received a shock when Sir William Jones wrote: 'Your English and Latin characters are so badly formed that I have infinite difficulty to read your letters, and have abandoned all hopes of deciphering many of them. Your Greek is wholly illegible; it is perfect algebra.' Archdeacon Coxe's handwriting was described as something that could not be called a hand or a fist, but a foot, and a club one too, producing a tangled skein that ran across the paper in knots which it was impossible to untie into a meaning; and Napoleon I. had so little mastery over his pen, that his letters from Germany to Josephine were at first sight taken for rough maps of the seat of war. Douglas Jerrold and Captain Marryat were almost capable of rivalling the feats of Peter Bales as a microscopic writer; the captain attaining such perfection that way, that before his manuscript could be handed over to the printer, it was requisite to have it copied in a fashion adapted for ordinary eyesight; and then the copyist, whenever he rested from his labour, was obliged to stick a pin where he left off, lest he should never find the place again.

Horace Greeley's 'copy' was a continuous string of riddles for the unfortunate compositors engaged on the paper of which he was proprietor, riddles they often solved in a way not exactly conducive to the propounder's serenity. When, in exposing some congressional malpractices, Greeley wrote, 'Tis true, 'tis pity, and pity 'tis, 'tis true,' the familiar quotation appeared in the un-Shakespearean guise, 'Tis two, 'tis fifty, and fifty 'tis, 'tis five.' A leader upon William H. Seward came forth headed 'Richard the Third.' When he alluded to certain electors as 'freemen in buckram,' the printer turned them into 'three men in a back-room.' These, under the circumstances, excusable delinquencies, were capped by the painter of *New York Tribune* bulletins. Having received a notice in the well-known but ever unintelligible hieroglyphics, intended to inform the public that they must seek 'Entrance in Spruce Street,' after some hours' hard study and cogitation, the puzzled man of the brush, in sheer desperation, dashed off in large letters, 'Editors on a Spree,' and posted the extraordinary announcement on the front door of the *Tribune* office. If Horace's own people were thus severely exercised, one can faintly imagine how his correspondents must have suffered. Writing to decline an invitation to lecture, he said: 'I am overworked and growing old. I shall be sixty next February 2d. On the whole, it seems I must decline to lecture henceforth, except in this immediate vicinity, if I do at all. I cannot promise to visit Illinois on that errand, certainly not now.' Rather to his surprise, he soon received the following reply: 'DEAR SIR—Your acceptance to lecture before our Association next winter, came to hand this morning. Your penmanship not being

the plainest, it took some time to translate it, but we succeeded, and would say your time, February 3d, and terms, sixty dollars, are entirely satisfactory. As you suggest, we may be able to get you other engagements in the immediate vicinity; if so, we will advise you.' When he informed the Iowa Press Association: 'I have waited, till longer waiting would seem discourteous, and now decide that I cannot attend your Press meeting next June as I would do. I find so many cares and duties pressing on me, that, with the weight of years, I feel obliged to decline any invitation that takes me over a day's journey from home.' Out of this, the recipients, in consultation assembled, made: 'I have wondered all along whether any squint had denied the scandal about the President meeting Jane in the woods on Saturday. I have hominy, carrots, and R. R. ties more than I could move with eight steer. If eels are blighted, dig them early. Any insinuation that brick ovens are dangerous to hams, gives me the horrors.' A discharged employé became editor of a western paper on the strength of Greeley's recommendation, said recommendation being really a letter of dismissal; but as no one could decipher anything but the signature, it was accepted as what its owner declared it to be. It is even said that the Sage of Chappaqua popped the question unwittingly. He wrote to a lady entreating her to abstain from sending poetical contributions to the *Tribune*. The lady submitted the letter to a family council, and, after much debate, the mysterious missive was pronounced to be a proposal of marriage, which was accepted forthwith. This story, we take to be a strong invention of Greeley's enemies or friends, although we can readily believe any story, however absurd, founded upon his eccentric style of writing, after seeing the small specimen of it, given not long ago, by one of our illustrated papers. Considering that he scorned to make any distinction between *s*, *a*, and *r*, and treated *b*, *p*, and *h* as identical in form, it is no wonder the Sage's letters were liable to be sent anywhere but where he wished them to go. One morning the *Tribune* startled its readers with a philippic against careless post-office officials, winding up with the statement that it took four days for a letter to go from New York to Chappaqua, some thirty miles. Mr. Kelly at once sent to Chappaqua for the envelope of the delayed letter. It was one of Horace's own, 'suggesting somewhat the same intellectual speculation that would result from studying the footprints of a gigantic spider that had, after wading knee-deep in ink, retreated hastily across the paper.' No clerk in the post-office could read the address, not even 'the chief of the bureau of hards'—American for our 'blind men.' That official, however, recognised the envelope directly his superior shewed it to him. 'This thing,' said he, 'came to me some days ago along with other "hards." I studied it at my leisure for a whole day, but could not make it out. I shewed it to our best experts; but what the writing, if writing it was, meant was a conundrum we all gave up. Finally, in desperation, it was suggested, as a last resource, to send it to Chappaqua, which happened to be right.'

Expert as he was in making his pen an instrument for the concealing of his thoughts, Greeley might have met his match among his own countrymen. Mr. Brooks, a railroad manager, wrote to a man living on the Central Route, threatening to

prosecute him forthwith, unless he removed a barn he had run up on the company's property. The recipient did not read the letter, because reading it was impossible, but he made out the signature, and arrived at the conclusion that the manager had favoured him with a free pass along the line. As such he used it for a couple of years, no conductor on the route being able to dispute his reading of the document. A great American lawyer will never be appreciated by posterity as his admirers would have him appreciated; one of them has hoaps of his letters that have been awaiting publication for years, for want of there being any one in America capable of reading them. Similarly the printing of some manuscripts of the author of *The Scarlet Letter* is indefinitely postponed, because, since Mrs Hawthorne died, all attempts to decipher them have ended in utter failure. Fenimore Cooper wrote an exceedingly bad hand, still it could be read with perseverance. Mr Emerson's is described as 'sprawling and illegible;' that of Mr Reverdy Johnson, as 'an illegible unformed scratch;' while that popular preacher, Mr H. W. Beecher, can hardly be considered a model scribe, seeing one of his daughters owned that her three guiding rules in copying his manuscript were, to remember that if a letter was dotted, it was not an *z*; if a letter was crossed, it was not a *t*; and if a word began with a capital letter, it did not begin a sentence.

An English nobleman once lost all chance of winning the lady of his love through her interpreting his written offer of marriage wrongly. She took it to be an offer of a box at the opera for a certain evening, and wrote a short note expressing her regret that she could not accept his offer, as she was 'engaged.' Wellington, who wrote as he spoke, plainly, was led into the committal of a ludicrous blunder through an unreadable correspondent. Mr J. C. London, the botanical writer, had a great desire to see the beeches at Strathfieldsaye, and wrote, asking the Duke's permission to inspect his trees. The Duke took the signature for that of the Bishop of London—C. J. London—and misreading another word as well, wrote to Dr Blomfield: 'My dear lord, I shall always be glad to see you at Strathfieldsaye, and my servant shall shew you as many pairs of my breeches as you may choose to inspect; but what you want to see them for, is quite beyond me!' Careless writing may entail more serious consequences. M. Mignet and M. St Hilaire figured as legates in the will of their friend M. Cousin; but the executors, unable to make out whether the testator had written 'à chacun deux,' or 'à chacun d'eux,' were obliged to ask a court of law to decide if the legates were entitled to one thousand or to two thousand francs apiece.

A delightfully supercilious upholder of the right of 'superior intellects' to be above the virtue of legibility, after asserting that nineteen out of twenty notable men write badly, says it is emphatically to be desired that all idle creatures, especially ladies, should be compelled, by act of parliament, to write a hand as clear as print under all circumstances; when the superior intellect is writing to the inferior, every latitude should be allowed; but nobody who is not a busy person ought to be permitted to write to those who are busy except in a fine flowing hand. He forgets to tell us what the law should be in the not unlikely case of one busy

man writing to another busy man, and characteristically ignores the fact, that an inferior individual may be as busy in his way as the superior intellect. Surely the reader has as much claim for consideration as the writer, and there can be no fair reason why he should have to waste his time, weary his eyes, and worry his brain, in deference to a superiority he might possibly be inclined to deny. Those who insist upon being privileged to write illegibly, should adopt the plan of the polite Frenchman, who, sensible of his faultiness, always forwarded his letters in duplicate, with this explanation: 'Out of respect, I write to you with my own hand, but to facilitate the reading, I send you a copy which I have caused my amanuensis to make.'

In the midst of the pother now going on about education, we hope that teachers will not forget to enjoin the obligation on all to write clearly, and, at all events, to avoid the impertinence of signing names in the form of a mysterious puzzle.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER XI.—WHAT THE SERVANTS THOUGHT OF IT.

JOHN MILBANK was one of those men who rise in the morning with the regularity of clock-work, but on the day after his parting with his brother, he was purposely a few minutes late. He was in hopes that Mrs Morden, who, although she had 'assistance' in the kitchen, always dusted out the parlour herself, would find the open letter that Richard had left behind him, on the table, and bring it up-stairs. But the housekeeper belonged to that fast expiring race of domestic servants who do not read their masters' letters, no matter how eligible may be the opportunity. She had seen it, indeed, but had simply removed it to the mantel-piece, in order that she might lay the table for breakfast. So John had to come down unsummoned, and discover the document for himself. Then he rang the bell, and, with a very grave face, put the note into Mrs Morden's hand, since to have made her understand its contents by word of mouth, would have been also to state them to the parish.

'Oh, the poor dear!' exclaimed she, and wringing her hands, fled instantly up to Richard's room. 'He is gone, Master John, he's gone!' cried she, from the top of the stairs. 'Oh, do 'ee come and look. He has never been anigh his bed. And yet—thank Heaven for it—he has left his brushes, and scents, and all: he would never have gone away for good without his brushes.' This remark was a sagacious one, and shewed that, within a limited range, Mrs Morden was an observer of human nature. Richard was not a dandy; but he was scrupulous about his personal appearance, and especially careful of his bright soft curling hair.

'He says in the letter,' observed John, referring to it, 'that when I read it he will be far away from Hilton, and never means to return to it again.'

'I know he does: but he can't mean it. There's his portmantel just as it was, and oven his carpet-bag. Does that look as though he had really meant to leave home? And not a word of good-bye to me, as loved him from a child. Lord, I can see him now, in his velvet frock tied with red ribbons at the sleeves, and looking like an angel! No, no;

he didn't know what he wrote, Master John. He was in drink when he did it.'

John listened to this babble with attention. The housekeeper was the type of many of her class, and perhaps he was curious to note the effect of Richard's sudden disappearance upon her. If she did not believe he had really gone, others would not do so; and in that case the letter which he had composed with such labour would, for the present, have been written in vain.

'You're trembling, Master John, and you look sadly scared, as well you may; but take you comfort; your brother will come back again. It ain't in nature he should leave his home for good with nothing but the clothes he stood in. He was ill to guide at times; but in an hour like this, one only thinks how sad it would be to miss his handsome face for ever. There, sit ye down on his own bed—well, on the chair, if you like it better—and think, think, for they all say you have such a sharp wit, how we are to get the poor lad back again.'

John was indeed deadly pale, and trembled even more than his aged companion. The resolution which he had shewn the previous night seemed to have quite forsaken him; he sat in his brother's room with his head resting on his hand, quite silent, notwithstanding Mrs Morden's impatient queries.

'Can you think of nothing, nothing, Master John, to get him back? Let me send at all events for the crier. Or shall we put "Come back" in the newspaper, as many does, that have been so bereaved, "and all shall be forgotten and forgiven?" You did quarrel a bit, I know: you quarrelled a bit last night belike'—John looked up quickly with a flushed, inquiring face. 'Well, I meant no offence: it was not your fault, I know, if you did.'

'We had no quarrel, woman.'

'That's true enough, because it takes two to make one, and you were ever patient with him; that I will say. But perhaps you spoke to him sharply about the drink. Did you?'

'No; he came in about two o'clock in the morning, and we talked of business matters; then I left him, and afterwards I heard the front door close.'

'Ah, then, he will come back again. Let us wait awhile. But when he does, oh, do ye, Master John, keep him off the drink. It's the cellar as will be his grave, else. Ah, well, you may frown, for you know it even better than I. Look ye here, sir: shall I go down to Mr Thorne's, and find out whether Miss Maggie has any news of him? Or shall I send the bricklayer yonder—he's come to mend the tool-house wall—round to Mr Linch?'

'No, no; not yet: it will be better to wait.'

'I daresay you're right, sir; since, when Master Richard comes back, it would annoy him to find such a fuss made. But oh, if he does come, save him, save him from himself! You are master here, they tell me, more than he is, if you had your rights. The strong drink that is left is yours. It killed my own father—rest his soul—and it is killing him. The eards is nothing to it, for it steals health and wealth away alike.'

John started to his feet with sudden eagerness.

'You are right, dame,' said he eagerly: 'I have been weak and foolish, where I ought to have been strong. There shall be no more card-playing nor wine-drinking in this house. Come down-stairs

with me.' When they got into the parlour, he opened drawers and cupboards, and threw every pack of cards that he could find in a heap upon the floor. 'Now, put these devil's books into the fire,' cried he.

'What! the new ones?' exclaimed the old housekeeper. 'Why not send them back to the makers?'

'To ruin others as they ruined him? No; burn them all I say.' When the fire was yet leaping and roaring over its painted prey, he bade her fetch the bricklayer.

'What! are you going to send for Mr. Lynch, then, after all? Won't that make Master Richard wild, sir, though, to be sure, not wilder than this;' and she looked at the glowing remnants on the hearth not without dismay.

'Do as I bid you!' cried John, stamping his foot. He was no longer cast down and nerveless now, and yet, in his vehemence and haste, he was as different from himself as he had been before. When the man left his work, and came into the house—'Bring bricks and mortar,' cried John, 'and brick up that cellar-door.' He spoke so loud that for once Mrs. Morden caught the sense of an observation not addressed to herself.

'But you will take out the wine first, surely, Master John?' remonstrated she.

'To ruin others as it ruined him?' cried John again. 'No; brick it up, I say.'

It seemed to Mrs. Morden that she had got a new master altogether; quite a grand Turk of a man. She admired his edicts, and indeed had herself suggested them, and yet she feared for the scene that was likely to take place when the prodigal should return. This one had always been so patient and submissive, that the other was sure to resent these high-handed acts, though only intended for his good. Nevertheless, it was evident that John was in earnest, and meant to stick by what he had done. Perhaps the old housekeeper's reiterated assurances that Richard would return, made him half believe that he would do so, and this awakened his ire. If he did come back, the great 'Who-shall-be-master?' question would, without doubt, have to be tried on a very narrow basis. There were no longer to be two kings in Brentford. John sat down as usual to breakfast, but not to eat. His rasher of bacon, and even the toast in the rack, remained untasted; but he swallowed the tea as Richard was wont to do on the morning after a debauch; yet sometimes on its way to his mouth he would poise the cup in air, and listen. Now it was the bricklayer come with more bricks to complete his task; now it was the postman; now one of those begging folk who, since old Matthew's time, ventured occasionally into the grounds of Rosebank, to take their chance of a curse or a shilling from its reckless tenant; but it was never Richard. Presently, the country lass who helped Mrs. Morden came to take away the breakfast things; John had generally left the house by that time, but this morning he shewed no signs of departure.

'What are you bringing in these things for?' She had brought another breakfast service with her.

'For Mr. Richard, sir.'

'To be sure; I had forgotten,' said he. His brother did not usually rise till noon, or even later, but all was wont to be prepared for him thus early.

'Mrs. Morden said I had better lay it, in case,

sir.' She meant in case of Mr. Richard's return; she had learned about his departure, of course, from Mrs. Morden. Here, too, it seemed that John was curious to have the opinion of others respecting his brother's disappearance, for he began to talk to this girl on the subject. This was the more strange, as he had never said three words to her perhaps before: he was shy of addressing young women, even though they were his own servant-girls; while his brother was very affable, and chucked them under their chins.

'Did you hear Mr. Richard leave the house last night?'

'No, sir; but I heard him come in.'

There was a little pause, during which John slowly wound up his watch, which he had apparently forgotten to do on the previous night: a very rare omission on his part. It seemed as though nothing was to come to pass as usual with him that morning.

'And what time might that have been, Lucy?'

'It struck two, sir, a few minutes after I heard his latch-key in the door.'

'You look after Mr. Richard's room, do you not? Well, have you ever known him to be out all night—the bed not slept in, I mean, as has happened now?'

'Never, Sir. I—I——'

'What's the matter?'

'Nothing, sir, nothing; only I do fear as he has come to some mischief. He had always a kind word for a poor girl;' and she suddenly burst into tears. It was nothing more than an emotional outburst in one wholly unaccustomed to conceal her feelings, but it seemed to disconcert John excessively. He sighed heavily, and taking up a book, affected to be occupied with its contents till the girl's task was done and she had left the room. Perhaps he felt it hard, when he was trying to steel his heart against his brother, that such unearned sympathy should be bestowed upon scapegrace Richard. Presently, he went into the little hall, and took down his greatcoat.

'Are you going out, Master John?' inquired the old housekeeper timidly. 'If Master Richard should return home in the meantime, what shall we do?' The last clicks of the trowel could be heard from where they stood, coming from the cellar-door.

'If any explanation of my conduct is required, I shall give it myself,' was the stern reply.

'And where would you be, sir?'

'Where would I be? Why, at the office, of course. Where should I be?'

'Well, I thought—and no offence, sir, but I think so still—that you should be taking that letter to Mitchell Street' (the street where the Thornes lived). John had got his greatcoat half-way on, and now it seemed he could get it no farther. He turned quite white, and sank down on the lobby-chair, with one arm in its sleeve and one out. 'Lord, bless ye, sir, don't take on so. It's a heart-breaking errand, no doubt, but somebody must tell her the news, and who so fit as you, being his only brother.'

John groaned. 'You are quite right, dame,' answered he humbly. 'I will go at once.'

He rose and put on his coat, drew himself up like a soldier on parade, and with the face of one who had volunteered for a Forlorn-hope, grave, stern, and resolute, went out upon his errand.

CHAPTER XII.—WHAT THE THORNES THOUGHT OF IT.

John's friends in Mitchell Street were early risers like himself, and when he arrived there they had already breakfasted. Maggie was below-stairs, making the housekeeping arrangements for the day, but he found the engraver hard at work in the sitting-room.

'Ah, John, I am right glad to see you; you are quite a stranger here,' was his cordial greeting. 'But what has happened?' He had taken his microscope from the eye which it obscured, and now regarded his visitor attentively. 'I am afraid that it is not good news which has brought you.'

'No; it is bad news.'

'About Richard, I suppose?' said the old man dryly.

'What! have you heard, then, Mr Thorne?'

'I have heard nothing; but nothing will surprise me.' Tho the old man got up and carefully closed the door. 'Let us spare her if we can. What is it?'

John put into his hand his brother's letter without a word.

'This is all a blind,' observed the engraver quietly, when he had read it. 'It is too good news to be true. Richard will never leave Hilton.'

'You really think that?'

'I am sure of that; that is, until he has got every shilling out of you that is to be got, broken my daughter's heart, and made an old man of me before my time. No, no; there is no such good luck in store for any of us three, you may be sure.'

'But why should he have written that letter?'

'I am not at the back of Richard's motives, thank Heaven!' answered the engraver bitterly. 'But he has probably some bad end in view. *I shall be far from here when you get this*, he says: that is a melodramatic touch which he has heard at the theatre. He is probably no farther, at this moment, than we are from the slums.'

'Don't talk like that, Thorne; I can't bear it. Suppose he should be—have made away with himself, for instance? Mind, I don't say it is probable, but I believe it possible.'

'Then you will believe anything. However, since you think it worth while—though, for my part, I expect he is at home by this time—let us discuss the matter. Had he money in his pocket?'

John hesitated a moment, then answered: 'Yes; he had a hundred pounds. I gave him a cheque on our London bank for that amount last night.'

'Then, if that cheque is not changed within twenty-four hours, I will believe anything you please. A man like Richard Milbank does not try the other world while he has money to spend in this one.'

'You are very hard upon Richard.'

'Sir, I have an only daughter,' was the cold reply. 'However, let that pass. If you wish to have my advice, without any comments, you shall have it. When did you see your brother last?'

'About three o'clock this morning. I waited up for him to remonstrate upon certain matters: his reckless expenditure, and the fatal effect it is having upon the business. We had no quarrel; but I spoke out. The time had come for it.'

'So I should think,' was the quiet rejoinder. 'Well, he was offended, doubtless—though not so much so as to prevent him taking your money; and now he intends to play upon your feelings by a disappearance—until he wants help again. He took everything with him he could lay his hands upon, I suppose?'

'He took nothing—nothing but the clothes he stood up in.'

'Indeed.' Tho the engraver looked less cynical and more serious.

John watched him with grave attention: if the opinions of Mrs Morden and her 'help' had had an interest for him, it was no wonder he was curious to hear Herbert Thorne's view of matters.

'And you say you had no tiff, John; he did not fling himself out of the house in a rage?'

'Certainly not. He left it a few minutes after we parted for the night; and I found this note awaiting me at breakfast.'

'What note?'

It was Maggie's voice, distinct, authoritative, clear, as she was wont to speak to all but her lover. Her gentle hand had opened the door, her soft step had entered the room, without disturbing the two men: the open letter was on the table, and her quick eye was already fixed upon it.

'That is Richard's hand,' cried she.

'Yes, Maggie. You must not be frightened,' began her father; but she had already seized the note, and made herself acquainted with its contents.

'What does it mean?' asked she, looking nervously from one to the other. 'Richard gone away, without a word, without a line to me! I don't believe it.'

'Just what *I* said,' observed the engraver dryly.

'The handwriting is his, but not the words,' continued she. 'There is some trickery in this.'

'Nothing more likely,' was the engraver's comment: 'but you don't suspect our friend here of tricking you, I suppose, Maggie?'

'Indeed, not,' answered she, holding out her hand, with a faint smile. 'Forgive me, John. I am sure that this has distressed you to the core. If anything should go amiss with Richard, there is one man at least whom it would pain, I know—his brother.'

It pained him so—or so it seemed, even to think of such mischance—that John could find no words to answer her. He stood stock-still, where he had risen, her hand held out to him in vain, though his eyes devoured her.

'Good Heavens!' cried she, looking at him anxiously, 'do you really think that this was written in earnest? That Richard meant—that?'

—She gasped for breath; then hurried frantically on: 'You knew him, loved him; blameless yourself, were tender to his faults. Tell me the truth, John; you are concealing something. I can bear the worst; and he—my father yonder—this with a crooked smile that became her sadly—' would welcome it. Is Richard dead? She had suddenly fallen on her knees at the young man's feet, her face whiter than milk, her long black hair shaken loose about her shoulders. 'Is he dead, is he dead?' sobbed she.

John shook his head; his pale lips parted twice, but no sound came. To see her appealing to him as to one she trusted, confident of his help and truth, yet all for another's sake, overpowered him quite.

'How can he be dead, lass,' observed the engraver kindly, 'when he tells us in his own hand that he is gone away?'

'It is to *you* I speak, John; answer me, for you know the truth.'

'I only know what is there, Maggie,' returned John slowly, and pointing to the letter. 'If you ask what is become of Richard, I cannot tell you; if you ask my opinion as to whether he has really gone away—I think he has.'

'There were reasons, you see, my girl,' put in the engraver, more anxious now to comfort Maggie than to establish his own theory, 'why Richard should have left the town. His affairs were in evil plight; there is little doubt that he owes money; and though John here has done his best'—

'He has *not* left the town,' interrupted Maggie excitedly; 'he would never go without taking leave of me; I am sure of it. I will stake my life upon it!'

'It is like enough you are right, lass. Richard may have returned home by this time, who knows? John and I will go back now and see.'

'And I will go with you,' said Maggie resolutely.

'Not to Rosebank,' exclaimed John suddenly, the remembrance, doubtless, of his high-handed acts that morning flashing upon him. 'If she should hear there of the eard-burning, or of the cellar-door being bricked up, would she not accuse him of harshness towards her lost Richard?'

'Yes, John, to Rosebank,' answered she calmly. 'Why not? If he is there, that is my place; if he has gone elsewhere, I will follow him.' She moved towards the door, then stopped, and turned upon them. 'Don't imagine that I will ever give him up. If this is a trick upon me, it will not serve.'

'A trick!' groaned John. But she had already left the room. 'Does she think I could stab her in joke?'

'No, no; she spoke to me, not to you at all,' said Thorne bitterly. 'She thinks that since I have tried fair means in vain to persuade her to break with Richard, that I am now trying foul. It seems strange to you, no doubt, but then you have not a daughter who clung to you for two-and-twenty years, and cast you off in a moment for a—— What! ready already, lass? Let us go, then.'

Maggie had been about half a minute in fleeing up-stairs and back again, and had contrived to put bonnet and shawl on, on the return journey. When love demands it, a woman can be quick, even over her toilet.

The three went out together, the father and daughter arm-in-arm, and John taking his place on the side remote from Maggie. He was never forward to be near her. They had not gone far, when Thorne whispered in his ear: 'There goes a man, who, if he would, could tell us as well as any where your brother is.'

John, being deep in thought, looked up with a quick start, almost of alarm. 'What man?'

'Dennis Blake. See! he has caught sight of us, and wishes to avoid a meeting. For my part, I don't like to be seen speaking to such a fellow, else he is very likely to know something.'

Maggie's quick ear, sharpened by anxiety, overheard this. 'If you are ashamed to speak with

anybody about Richard, I am not,' said she, withdrawing her hand from her father's arm. But another hand was laid upon her wrist, as she was about to hurry after Blake's retreating figure.

'No, Maggie,' said John firmly; 'you shall not speak to that man, neither now nor over; I will do it.' And off he started with rapid strides.

Since, without running, it was clear that his pursuer could not be evaded, Blake slackened his pace, and suffered John to come up with him. His face, which the latter, of course, since he was behind him, could not see, was a study of the baser emotions—dislike, apprehension, and duplicity. Lavater would have said: 'That man is a scoundrel, but he possesses a soul, for he has a secret on it.'

His shifty eyes seemed to grow smaller as John came up with him, or perhaps it was that his frowning brow hid them more and more.

'Ha! is that you, Mr Milbank? Good-day to you;' and he smiled as a dog does, shewing his teeth.

'Good-day. I have something to say to you, Mr Blake. An unpleasant affair has happened: my brother Richard is missing.'

'Missing?' His look of surprise was perfect: if it was not genuine, Dennis Blake had another talent in him besides that of playing short whist. He was an actor spoiled.

'Yes; he left home about two o'clock this morning, *with the intention of calling upon you.*'

Here both men's faces were well worth looking at: his who put the query was searching, resolute, menacing, and even desperate—its colour a dead white. The expression of the other was variable: flying clouds of doubt obscured it; its hue changed from red to white, from white to red, as quickly as the colours in a kaleidoscope. 'I have not seen your brother since the day before yesterday—not since I saw *you*,' said he at last.

John Milbank drew a long deep breath; the relief of finding that Richard had not discovered that the thousand-pound bill had been already honoured was doubtless intense.

'And you never heard him express any intention of leaving home?' This in the tone with which a counsel puts his last question—always a comparatively unimportant one—to a witness who has done his cause good service.

'Well, I can't say that,' was the unexpected reply. 'I have heard him say he was sick and tired of Hilton, but that, of course, he was bound by circumstances to remain here.'

'Then, if he had money in his pocket, and was no longer bound, you think it not unlikely my brother might have taken such a step?'

John spoke with great calmness—not carelessly, yet with all his usual deliberation, but there was an eagerness in his eyes which he could not quench.

'Such a step as to leave Hilton?' answered Blake quietly. 'I should think nothing was more probable. I don't say, however, but that he may turn up again pretty soon, you know. Let us hope he may.'

'Thank you.'

It was with quite a friendly nod that John returned to his companions, for in truth the person who had given him most comfort that morning—and never had he needed it more—had been Mr Dennis Blake.

'Well, man, what news?' cried Thorne, who by this time was but a few paces distant.

'No news: Blake has not seen Richard since yesterday.'

'John,' said Maggie solemnly, 'I watched that man's face while he was talking to you, and I am sure he was not speaking truth.'

'It is possible,' returned John quietly. 'Time will shew.'

LIGHTS AT SEA.

THAT collisions at sea are a fruitful cause of disaster, is amply testified by the annual record of wrecks; and the means taken to prevent what are obviously among the most preventable dangers, of the deep, become yearly of more importance as ocean-traffic increases. Roughly speaking, about one-fourth of the casualties near the shores of the United Kingdom are due to collisions; and of this number, nearly three-fourths, as might be expected, occur at night. The rules to be observed by ships meeting at sea have been the subject of international negotiation; and upwards of thirty governments, including those of all the important maritime nations, have agreed to use a common code. One of the most important of these rules applies to the obvious danger occasioned by two ships sailing in opposite directions, and in a line with each other. In this case, each is supposed to steer so as to allow the other to pass on the left or *port* side. Even this simple regulation has, however, in some cases, been the occasion of the danger it is intended to avert; and it has been necessary for the Board of Trade—the authority in all such matters—to explain that it only applies to ships meeting in the same, or nearly in the same line with each other. It has been the case that vessels sailing in opposite directions, but in parallel courses, and which would have passed safely on the right side of each other, have, by altering their course, with a view to passing on the left, come into collision. It is not our intention to go into the technical details of the 'rule of the road' at sea; its main principles are (in addition to that we have described)—that it is the duty of steamers to give way to sailing-ships; that ships sailing in most favourable circumstances with regard to the wind, have to give way to others less favoured; and that if one ship is overtaking another, it is the duty of the former to keep clear of the latter. It follows from this, that vessels should, at night, display such signals as to enable any moving ship to know of any other ship which it may come near, whether the latter is at anchor or in motion, and if in motion, whether under sail or steam. It is also essential that it should be indicated whether the two ships are moving in the same straight line, and whether they are proceeding in the same or in opposite directions. The regulations as to lights to be exhibited by ships at sea are so framed as to secure that every vessel shall furnish this information to all others which may come near her.

On a dark but clear night, at any point of the coast near a much frequented highway of the sea, may be noticed no less than five distinct arrangements of lights on board ships. The observer is probably struck at first by the coloured lights, which are at once seen to be in motion, and are soon noticed to be in pairs. Perhaps a green light is seen first moving slowly in the distance; next, for a few seconds, a red one is seen in company with it; and then the green light disappears, and

the red is seen alone, still in motion. If the channel is intricate, we may again see the two lights together; or perhaps lose sight of both for a short time, and then see one of them again. It is plain that one is on each side of a ship, and that the appearances and disappearances are due to the vessel turning in her course. In some cases there will be seen a white light between the two coloured ones, but above them, obviously on the mast, always visible when either of the coloured lights is visible, but disappearing when they both disappear. In a few instances we may notice two such white lights in company with a pair of coloured lights. If we are near a roadstead such as Yarmouth Roads or the Downs, we shall notice some exceedingly bright white lights, having no coloured ones near them, evidently stationary: they are on board ships at anchor; and the two white lights in the distance, one a little over the other, which never disappear, and move so slowly that they hardly seem to move at all, indicate that a fishing-boat is at her night's work, engaged in drift-net fishing. No boat is allowed to anchor, if it can possibly be avoided, where such fishing is going on, and all vessels engaged in it have to carry two bright white lights in circular lanterns at their mast-heads. This is provided for by a clause in the Sea-fisheries' Act, but is only applicable to French and English fishing-vessels. All ships at anchor have to exhibit, in a circular lantern, a uniform, unbroken white light, visible three miles in any direction on a favourable night. In inquiries into the causes of such accidents as the well remembered *Northfleet* disaster, the first points investigated are: Did the ship at anchor have her anchor-light burning brightly? Was it uniform? Was it unobstructed? If these questions can be answered clearly in the affirmative, the stationary ship is at once cleared of blame.

All vessels in motion have to carry coloured lights—a red one on the *port*, and a green one on the *starboard* side—of such character as to be visible at a distance of two miles on a dark and clear night. The lanterns in which they are carried are usually of such a shape that a horizontal section is something like a quarter of a circle, the curved side being the coloured glass lens. There is but little trouble about the red light, but it is found in practice somewhat difficult to get a strong green light; the colour is often undecided, and the light feeble. The Board of Trade insists upon the lanterns and the burners within them being of regulation sizes. When paraffine is used, a smaller wick is allowed than for other oil; but, in consequence of the intense heat caused by the former endangering the lenses, a full-sized lantern is rigidly insisted on. Every side-lamp is also required to have a metal reflector. The side-lights have to be so placed that each is visible to any one approaching its side of the ship, and travelling either in the opposite direction, or at right angles to the ship's course, or between the two. Each light should, according to the regulations, be visible through an arc of ten points of the compass, that is, through an angle of one hundred and twelve and a half degrees. This is managed in each case by the use of a screen, consisting of a flat piece of board placed vertically against the lantern and in the direction of the ship's length. The rays of light are, by means of this, prevented from crossing the line

of the vessel's course to any appreciable extent; and the red and green lights can only be seen both at once from a ship travelling in a direction exactly opposite, and in danger of collision. The shape of the lantern is a sufficient security that the lights are not visible behind the ship. Considerable care is necessary in fixing the side-lights in such a position that they may not be obscured by sails, and that they may invariably retain their proper position. Seamen are proverbially the most careless of mankind; but it will hardly be believed that many of them are careful in the proper management of their lights, not to prevent accident, so much as to secure that, if culpably run down by another ship, they may get compensation, of which there is no chance unless they can prove that they were carrying their proper lights.

A steamer is distinguished from a sailing-ship by the fact of her carrying, in addition to the green and red side-lights, a white light at her mast-head, the lantern being so constructed that the light is not visible behind. Steamers engaged in towing other vessels have to give notice of the additional complication thus caused by carrying two white lights at the mast-head. It will thus be seen that every ship at sea is bound to declare whether she is stationary, or in what direction she is going, also whether she is under sail or steam. In foggy weather, all that is contemplated by existing regulations is, that each ship shall give information on the first and third of these points; to provide for the second would require a more elaborate arrangement of signals than is at present used. The bell is in every ship the fog-signal used when at anchor; it is supposed to be rung every five minutes. Steamers in motion in a fog make their presence known by means of a steam-whistle; and sailing-ships are under the same circumstances distinguished by the use of a fog-horn, each of which signals is to be sounded at intervals of not more than five minutes. Very often the fog-horn is attached to a pair of bellows.

We have hitherto spoken only of signals intended to avert danger; the signals of distress to be used by ships at sea are also the subject of legislation. The question of distress-signals has been much discussed since the *Northfleet* disaster, and they were the subject of legislation during the last session of parliament. The alleged defect in the old arrangements was, that some of the signals of distress might be mistaken for the signal for a pilot, and hence would very likely not attract help in time to be of any service. One of the distress-signals which has always been and is now used, is the well-known 'minute-gun at sea.' It is a most effective way of calling for assistance; but it is sometimes unfortunately the case that the gun provided for the purpose is made a receptacle for all sorts of odds and ends, even, as has been recently stated, for the swabs used in washing the deck; the powder has perhaps made as many voyages as the ship, and is damp and useless; and so, when the gun is wanted, it cannot be fired. Besides the minute-gun, the new act prescribes as signals of distress rockets or shells of any colour or description fired one at a time at short intervals; and also flames on the ship such as would be produced by a burning tar-barrel. The signals for pilots prescribed for the sake of distinction, in order that they may not be mistaken for danger-signals, are, a blue light every

fifteen minutes, and a bright white light flashed at frequent intervals for about a minute at a time. It is also provided, that if distress-signals are used improperly, the person responsible is liable to pay compensation for any labour, risk, or loss caused to any one who responds to the supposed call for assistance. It will thus be seen that, so far as public authorities are concerned, the improved system of signals at sea puts navigation on a safe footing. It has, however, to be recollected that all skill may be baffled by fogs; and what falls upon us as a more painful consideration is that nothing can avert disaster where there is an imperfect outlook. In this, as in railway transit, the terrible thing to be dreaded is negligence of all the ordinary precautions.

IN DANGER.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

KIZIL-GATCH was but a poor place, only a hamlet of five-and-thirty squalid huts, with the painted 'konak' of some Mussulman landed proprietor peeping here and there through the screen of fruit-trees that girdled the settlement. There was a mosque, adorned with white marble and leaf-gold by the pious liberality of Mohammedan worthies long dead, but the polished floor of which was now covered by ragged and filthy matting; while the Mollah, who represented dean and canons, was a bronzed and brawny tatterdemalion, compared with whom Friar Tuck was a respectable ecclesiastic, and whom I shrewdly suspect to be innocent of any schooling at the colleges of Bagdad, Bokhara, or Damascus. But there was a pretty minaret, slender, white, and tipped with gold, up which a blinking old tailor in a green turban and horn-rimmed spectacles used pantingly to climb by the steep corkscrew staircase, to chant forth in his quavering voice, four times a day, the Moslem's summons to prayer. That old Hadji was beadle, clerk, and verger to the mosque, where the villagers' attendance was by no means regular, although nine-tenths of our neighbours were followers of the Prophet.

Then there was a Russo-Greek church, of painted wood, with copper dome, and walls hung with tasteless pictures of the Panagia, before which twinkled feeble lamps fed with the naphtha that, in those regions, is often to be had for the gathering, floating, as at certain seasons it does, on the waves of the Caspian. Every priest, however, was well supplied with gorgeous vestments, and flashed forth in green and gold, in white, violet, and crimson; while on occasions of high festival the altar was a blaze of flaring flambeaux, and clouds of smoking incense almost hid the scarlet-capped acolytes and the kneeling papas and his subordinate 'popes' and deacons from the sight of the congregation, which was indeed a scanty one, save when the stockaded fort was tenanted by a garrison of the flat-capped Muscovite soldiery. There was also a small synagogue, where a score or so of bearded Jews collected on the Sabbath. What was called the Bazaar comprised within its few rotten planks all the shops of the place; but it often happened that wandering traders opened their packs and held a sort of irregular fair outside the village, the camels being tethered around in a ring, and craning forth their snaky necks as if to judge of the quality of the

coarse cotton prints of Russian manufacture, the Toula cutlery and guns, the mirrors, handkerchiefs, and necklaces of amber or coral, there exhibited. There was no lack of food, however, for those who could find even the smallest coin wherewith to pay for a meal, and I found that if I reduced my consumption of foreign or imported luxuries to a minimum, my salary would stretch far enough to allow of considerable savings at the end of the year.

It was a land of plenty in which I had pitched my tent, so long as one could be content with cheap Tartar mutton and cheap Tartar fowls, though I admit that a West-end poulterer or butcher would have eyed with contempt both the lank sheep and the long-legged poultry. Hares, partridges, and bustards, with snipes and wild-ducks, were in winter brought in, very abundantly, by boys, who were thankful to sell their game for a few copecks; and the hardy Turkish fishermen netted enough of scaly spoil to keep the village well supplied with bream and shad and giant lake-trout. Then there was no lack of milk, or of curds, and the rank cheese which the Turcomans delight in; the gardens yielded goodly stores of fruit, of grapes and melons, plums and pears; and gourds and buckwheat, beans and barley, rice and cucumbers, appeared to grow pell-mell together in the fields. As for my dwelling, I was lodged, not inconveniently, in a suite of rooms built over our newly erected warehouses, and waited on by an old Russian ex-soldier, Paul Petrovich by name, who could sew as well as he could cook, and was as neat-handed in house-work as any woman could have been—being, in fact, one of those docile, meek, dexterous attendants, into which a long course of rigorous military discipline, and the habit of being *dushitek*, or body-servant, to a series of officers, converts the Muscovite mujik. On the opposite side of a little creek, spanned by a bridge of wood that the taste of some native painter had bedizenized with alternate stripes of pink and light-blue, was the house of the local manager, by far the most imposing mansion in the hamlet, being solidly built of sun-dried bricks and faced with cut stone.

A remarkable man, in his way, was this local manager, the Company's chief official at our small station. His name was Menelaus M'Phinn, and he was a native of Donegal or Antrim, one of those north of Ireland descendants of Scottish colonists who contrast so forcibly with the mercurial Celts of Clare or Kerry. He was over sixty years of age, but more vigorous than many a youth who had been more tenderly nurtured, and was indeed as grim, rugged, and unbending as the basalt pillars of Staffa, or the iron-bound cliffs of his own wild coast. 'I was hard raised,' he would say, with a stony smile of self-complacency: 'bound 'prentice, at nine years old, sir, to a North Sea fishing skipper; next, at fourteen, aboard a collier brig, where kicks and cuffs were plenty, and sleep and provisions on short allowance. No one who hasn't kept watch barefoot on a deck heaped up with snae-drift and half-froze hailstones, or that hasn't hauled at slippery ropes that the cauld weather had turned to ice rather than hemp, can tell how it hardens a boy.'

I congratulated Mr M'Phinn on his having gone so satisfactorily through the case-hardening process in question, and presently learned further particulars of his life. A rough life had it been, since

the novitiate on board the collier vessel had been succeeded by certain whaling and sealing voyages to Greenland, Spitzbergen, and other spots in high latitudes; then, by the part-ownership of an Archangel merchant-*barque*; presently by the command of a Russian river-steamer, which in turn gave way to the responsible position of superintendent of a shipbuilder's yard on the Sea of Azof, a branch of industry rudely put an end to by the Crimean war. Since then, Mr M'Phinn had filled many posts, more or less precarious, in the Asiatic territories of the Czar; and being a man of known integrity, and well acquainted with the Russian character, had received from our Company the snug appointment of local manager. He had savings, gradually accumulated in the course of a thrifty and laborious career, and which were no doubt destined for those nieces, daughters of a younger sister, of whose accomplishments, acquired at a fashionable boarding-school, he spoke with honest pride, and to whose support I imagine that he contributed with a liberality in strong contrast with his own rigid self-denial.

The other Europeans at the station were not very notable. There was a fat, spectacled young German clerk, a mere machine for double entry and correspondence; and a sallow Russian, who periodically asked for leave of absence to gamble away, at the nearest town, his quarter's salary. We had two or three mechanics from Britain, smiths or shipwrights, intelligent workmen well worth their high wages, and who were foremen of the different gangs of Russian and Cossack artisans. And we had two young Irish engineers, my so-called assistants, whom Mr M'Phinn pithily described as 'hare-brained gowks' and 'hard bargains,' and whose blunders and ignorance cost me many an hour of extra labour. However, Messrs Leary and O'Dwyer were thoroughly good-hearted young fellows, and when they found that I was willing to coach them through their calculations, and get their instruments into order, instead of reporting them at head-quarters for incompetence and neglect, they really did make some efforts to be useful in their allotted duties, and were always friendly and good-humoured. My own post, as I soon found, was no sinecure, for independent of the fact that we had two vessels on the stocks, and a harbour in course of construction, frequent surveys, sometimes at a considerable distance from home, had to be undertaken for the purpose of ascertaining the capabilities of the country. I was allowed three horses and their keep, no great expense in a district where Tartar ponies are to be bought and fed at a cost that would seem ludicrous to a London jobmaster, and I rode fast and far into the interior, besides visiting, by the help of a red-sailed Turkish fishing-craft, every creek, bay, islet, and sandbar in the gulf. My main task was, of course, to press on the completion of the harbour-works, and this was no light matter. The Company's head surveyor had decided that it was practicable to deepen an ancient channel of the Kur river, long silted up, and to construct a fine harbour where now nothing but a tiny thread of water came trickling down between the variegated sandbanks. We had a steam-dredge boat at work, but fuel often failed us, and the supply of labour was more precarious still. There was something exquisitely provoking, to one fresh from the stir and bustle of Western Europe, in witnessing the indolent apathy of those on whose

muscle and sinew we relied for the execution of our projects. It is customary, in several parts of West Central Asia, for handicraftsmen to agree in a compromise as regards the respective holy-days enjoined by church, mosque, and synagogue. Thus, not only the Christian Sunday, but the Sabbath of the Jews, and the Friday of the Moslems, are observed, as far as rest from labour goes, by the votaries of all religions, and we had to put up as best we might with a custom which deprived us of nearly half the week's work.

It was not merely, however, that the working-days were few, but the most annoying circumstance was that the motley gangs of toilers who mustered at our call frittered away the golden hours with that grand indifference to time which seems innate in the oriental mind. They would work for a spell 'like men,' to use Mr M'Phim's emphatic laconism, and then suddenly knock off, kindle the fragrant tobacco in their rude water-pipes, and sit down for a smoke, in utter disregard of the remonstrances of the foreman. Sometimes a quarrel arose, and a ring would be formed, and a wrestling-bout occur, while the barrows stood empty, and the chink of the shovels ceased. They never could resist the attractions of a travelling juggler, ballad-singer, or pedler; and even the sight of a strange vessel standing in for the shore made them drop pick and mallet, and crowd like so many school-boys to the beach. At the same time, they were good-humoured, not lacking in intelligence, and but too demonstrative in their respect, kissing our hands and making endless salaams and genuflexions before us, and meekly enduring the reproofs which their conduct often rendered necessary. The manager, who was in theory a stern disciplinarian, used to frown severely upon them, and mutter dark threats concerning a 'rope's end;' but even he in private admitted to me that they were 'no just that bad, dawdling ne'erdo-weels as they are;' while I found myself able after a while to gain some influence over them, and to enforce comparative steadiness at their tasks. Petty rewards, some lecturing, and not a little banter, an occasional treat, and care to set a good example as regarded regularity, did wonders with the untutored natures of those for whom I was responsible; and before long I had the satisfaction of seeing the works make tolerable progress.

It was a well-employed, but at the same time a remarkably uneventful existence that we led at Kizil-Gatch; and as I walked to and fro, listening to the blows of the mallets, and the dull, heavy thud of the 'monkey'-engine as the massive piles were driven deep into the mud, or noting the gradual growth of the steamers, as the iron plates were riveted together, I used often to cast my eyes over the measureless stretch of the lake-sea, marvelling how life could possibly be so prosaic in a region reputed so romantic. Those white lateen sails seen so far away on the horizon, could they be the harbingers of a marauding flotilla of Turcoman pirates, such as were once the terror of these waters, come to sweep off into Khivan slavery the dwellers on the coast? No; the Russian gunboats had effectually cleared this part of the Caspian from turbaned freebooters, and the sails were probably those of peaceful Persian traders. That trampling of horse-hoofs and cloud of dust did not, as of old, announce Uzbaks or Kirghiz on a foray, but quiet merchants from Tashkend or from Samarcand, carrying musk

and spices and brick-tea, and white brass from China, and shawls from Tibet, and dressed yak-leather, to barter for the produce of Armenia and Daghestan.

Only once did any noteworthy incident occur to vary the monotony of our, or rather of my laborious life. I was riding homewards, one evening, along the stony shore of the gulf, and looking forth, musingly, over the waters of the bay as they gradually darkened while the sun sank lower and lower beneath the red bluffs to westward, when a voice addressed me, cautiously, and in the Latin tongue, from behind the shelter of a rock that bordered on the road. The voice was weak and low, and the words, which on paper would have probably seemed familiar enough, sounded strangely to my ear, but I reined up my horse and gazed around for some signs of the unseen speaker.

'Are you alone, O Domine?' said the feeble voice again; and this time I dismounted, and slipping the bridle of my horse over a thorny shrub that grew near, I made my way through the bushes and long grass, and soon reached the place where lay the person who had accosted me.

It was a sight that I shall never, to my dying day, forget. Crouching under the lee of a rock, and screened by the rank grass and saplings, lay, like a wounded wild beast in its lair, the emaciated figure of a young, a very young man, miserably clad in a tattered gray coat and a pair of old regimental trousers. He was bareheaded, and his long dark hair hung in neglected elf-locks about his haggard face—a handsome face withal, but thin, pinched, and sunburnt; while the large bright eyes, the size of which seemed unnatural by contrast with the excessive emaciation of the cheeks, were fixed on me with the wistfulness which we may observe in those of a hurt or hunted animal. His shoes had been cut to pieces by long walking, and one foot was bare, while the other was wrapped in a blood-stained piece of rag. A little wallet of plaited rushes, and a stick, lay beside him on the grass, and I could see that the former contained a handkerchief, and one or two other small objects, as well as a handful of the ears of half-ripe corn. There he lay, propped on one feeble arm; and as he caught my eyes fixed on him with natural compassion, he murmured again, and in Latin as before: 'Panem—da—da. For the love of God, bread.'

'My poor fellow, you are ill, or have met with an accident, perhaps,' said I, doing my best to make myself intelligible in that spoken Latin which is yet, in Poland and Hungary, what it once was throughout the wide extent of the empire of the Cæsars: 'I will go at once to fetch help, and'—

'No, no!' the sufferer interrupted me, with nervous eagerness. 'No; you must call no one, tell to none that you have seen me. They would have me again, did they know where I am.'

This sentence puzzled me considerably. Of what was this famished wayfarer afraid? My first impulse had been to regard him as a Christian slave escaping from captivity among the savage Turcomans of the north-east coast of the Caspian; but now I began to doubt whether I had not to do with a madman who had eluded his keepers, or possibly, though the poor fellow's looks were very prepossessing, with a convict who had broken prison. The poor wretch seemed to read my thoughts, for he stretched out his thin hand towards me, and

said in a half-whisper, but eagerly: 'No; I am not mad. No; I am no thief. Give bread to a perishing man—but keep—secret—Pole—Siberia—escaped!' His eyes closed, and I thought that he had fainted, but in a moment more he gained strength enough to say: 'I have lain here long—more than a day—and have seen many pass, but dared not speak. You are not a Russian, lord, and will have mercy.'

What was I to do, save to assure the unfortunate fugitive, in the most reassuring words that, in my bungling Latin, I could command, of my speedy return with food and cordials, and to promise to keep his secret at any cost. The sound of kind speech brought tears to the poor fellow's eyes, and he tried to kiss my hand in token of gratitude, and this time fairly fainted, so that I had to fetch water from the beach below, and sprinkle his face, before he revived. Then, pledging myself to come back as quickly as possible, I put on my drenched hat once more, and rode off at a brisk pace, coming up, some minutes later, with Messrs Leary and O'Dwyer, my two subalterns, who were returning from a shooting expedition. I could not, without attracting notice and inquiry, trot or gallop past my coadjutors in the Company's work, and it so happened that the young engineers had really something to say, and many counsels to ask, as to the labours of the morrow, so that although I chafed at the delay, I could not succeed in shaking them off until at a sober walk we reached Kizil-Gatch, nor could I instantly procure, without exciting suspicion, the food and liquor needed, so that it was dusk when I left the village with my load.

Bread, the ill-made Tartar butter, fresh sweet milk, and some morsels of meat, and spoonfuls of brandy, cautiously administered, brought new life to the poor wasted form of the wanderer whom I had found by the wayside. We have all of us seen a fading flower come back to bloom and freshness when the welcome water has bathed its parched roots; but to few of us has it been given to recall, by the help of a little nourishment, a young and vigorous human life that was passing away through sheer inanition. A brave boy he was, and a grateful one, this Polish lad, whom gradually, bringing him food and wine each day, with clean linen and clothes, and other comforts which none appreciate who have not tasted of the bitterness of sheer savagery, I nursed back to health. His name was Demetrius Vassili, and his rank I guessed to be that of one of those farmer-nobles who are so plentiful in the old Duchy of Warsaw, and who never forget, as they hold the plough-stilts or herd the black-cattle, that their ancestors were privileged to mount on horseback and vote, by squadrons, for the election of a king. His family had suffered sore usage at the hands of the Russian authorities, and he had himself been impressed into military service as a stripling, and made corporal first, and then sergeant.

'You see, English knight,' he said, with a faint smile, 'we were cleverer than they were, and so, Poles and Catholics though we were, they always put the stripes on our sleeves, while orthodox, flat-faced mujiks bore the musket of a private for ever. Then my regiment was in Circassia, and there was a plot among us Polish soldiers—wherever there are Poles there will be a plot, ay, and with shame and sorrow I say it, a feather-brain to blab, or a traitor to betray—and then I was sent to Tobolsk

for life, with nine more. Six of us escaped. I am here alone.'

I asked the fugitive concerning the fate of his companions.

'One was drowned as we swam a river; and a second died of hunger and fatigue,' he answered simply; 'a third, poor Alexis, was shot by the frontier guards. The other two were captured, for the sake of the hundred rouble reward, by the squirrel-hunters of the Ural Mountains, who chased me also, fast and far, so that I gave up the hope of reaching Europe, and wandered south. You see' (pointing to the half-ripe ears of corn in his wallet) 'how I have been forced to pilfer from the fields, like a starved deer in winter, that I might keep death at bay.'

His great fear was of being retaken by the Russians, and sent back to the convict colonies of the bleak land to the north, and he repeatedly declared that, sooner than this, he would die.

'I have a relative,' he said, 'my poor Uncle Michael, working in the brine-pits near Irkutsk, these eleven years. He is as dead to us, and less happy than my father, who died in jail, or my brother, speared by a Cossack in the riots at Lublin. Try, kind Englishman, to keep me out of their clutches, and complete the good deed that you have done by smuggling me over the border, I care not whither, beyond reach of the Black Eagle's talons, and where I can earn my bread.'

Indeed, I had very little doubt but that my new acquaintance would be able, honestly, to maintain himself, were he but safe, for he was a well-grown young fellow, active and intelligent, and had one of those faces that are the best passports to the confidence of others. But to dispose of him was no easy matter, since I dared not share the secret with any of my colleagues. O'Dwyer and Leary had warm hearts, and a deserter and a rebel would have enlisted their Hibernian sympathies in a moment; but they were certain to reveal the truth through downright incapacity for reticence; while M'Phinn had an almost superstitious abhorrence of whatever might offend the despotic government under which we lived, and even his natural kindness might not have prevented his consigning a 'poleetical' fugitive to the tender mercies of the officer in command of the Russian fort. A tame escaped prisoner, on the other hand, is an awkward pet to provide for, and it was an anxious time for me, until a lucky chance enabled me to bribe the captain of a Persian trading dhow to stow away amongst his bales of cotton and broadcloth the runaway from Russian military justice, promising to land him safe and sound on the Shah's territory.

'We shall meet again, dear friend!' said the young Pole, as, with streaming eyes, he wrung my hand at parting; 'and if we do, you shall not find Demetrius Vassili forgetful.'

We were to meet again, and that more speedily than I had anticipated. About two months later, a report which I had thought it my duty to address to the chief engineer of the Company, resident in Astrakhan, called forth a reply from that functionary. I had mentioned that while timber, in that part of the Russian dominions in which I was stationed, was scarce and dear, I had learned, from the gossip of Mohammedan travellers, that an almost unlimited supply of wood, and that of the best quality, could be cheaply obtained from the Persian province of Mazauderan. Persia, generally

speaking, is by no means a well-wooded country, the high table-lands, denuded of all vegetation, bearing no slight resemblance to the bare plateaux of Castile; but there are exceptions to this rule, and the mountainous regions of the frontier province nearest to us were described as abounding in fine trees, any quantity of which could be bought at a low rate, and which were well adapted for ship-building purposes. The Caspian, too, would float a raft of rough-hewn logs to our nascent harbour, if only a couple of steamers could be sent to tow the unwieldy mass; and I was assured that native labour, sufficient for the task of felling and launching the timber, could easily be procured on the spot.

The answer to my memorial was a request that I would at once proceed personally to the coast of Mazanderan, to ascertain with my own eyes the truth of the reports which had reached me, and should they prove well-founded, to purchase timber, on a large scale, on behalf of the Company; while a round sum of money in specie was at the same time remitted to me, gold and silver, especially the latter, being indispensable in Persia.

Sturdy old Mr M'Phinn, the manager, was half inclined to be jealous and irritable when first he heard that I, a newcomer in the land, had made a discovery which had eluded his own scrutiny.

'But then, to be sure,' he said, shaking his iron-gray head, 'I never went gossiping with a lot of misbelieving boys, with sugar-loaf caps and shawl girdles, as you have done, Mr Master-ton. Well, boy, I wish, for your sake, this fine fancy of yours may prove profitable; but keep awake, I warn you, for many a throat that was tight and sound at night, in Persia there, turns out to be open enough in the morning; d'ye take me?' And he drew the back of his large hand, with a meaning gesture, across his own neck, nodding and chuckling as if at some exquisite joke. He was, however, by far too excellent a man to harbour any grudge against a junior on such grounds of offence, and he co-operated heartily, not merely in procuring me a passage on board a coasting-vessel bound for Persia, not so easy to obtain just then, as it had been somewhat earlier in the season, but also in seeking a competent person to accompany me as guide and interpreter. Such a one at length presented himself in the person of a certain Ali Sahib.

Ali Sahib, as his name implied, was a native of India, and had received the education of a moonshee, or professor of languages and orthography. He was introduced to Mr M'Phinn and myself by the richest Russian resident at the neighbouring town of Salian, a noted brandy-seller, and had besides in his possession a number of certificates, some of which were signed by English officers and civilians. He spoke English, though with some slowness and diffidence; but of his proficiency in Persian I was assured; while his acquaintance with the difficult Russian tongue was far from contemptible, and he was fluent in the various dialects of Turki and Pushtoo, spoken in the countries north-west of British India. Moonshee though he was, and with some pretensions to the rank of a Mohammedan gentleman, he was yet willing, for the modest remuneration of twenty-five dollars, to give me the benefit of his services during the trip, and to discharge all the duties of an ordinary dragoman; and I thought myself exceedingly lucky in securing

such a paragon of an interpreter. The arrangement was concluded, then, and nothing remained but to embark on board the Russian steamer *Suwarow*, now overdue on her passage to the south.

THE SEWERS OF PARIS.

In Paris, it is quite a common thing to make a trip underground, at any rate from the Place du Châtelet to the Place de la Madeleine. The old guide-books are full of the wonders of the catacombs; nowadays, instead of going into these great gypsin quarries, visitors are allowed to traverse the *égout Rivoli*, and there are always plenty of claimants for the tickets of admission. You sit in a sort of open railway truck, with a lamp at each corner, pushed rapidly on by four men in white blouses; there is no more smell than there is in the streets above—not so much, except just when we are passing (our guide tells us) under the barracks of the Louvre. Under the Place de la Concorde, the land-journey comes to an end; at this point, the Rivoli sewer falls into the main; and so, instead of our cars, we have to take to boats; but the voyage is a short one, and we soon get to the winding iron staircase, by which we emerge among the astonished idlers of the Place de la Madeleine.

This, of course, is the show-sewer—widest, loftiest, cleanest of all—just like a canal, with broad, neat footpaths. Between this and the 'house-drain,' there are ten kinds of sewers, getting gradually smaller and smaller, but all, except two, having footpath enough for the scavengers to walk along. Besides noting the telegraph lines, wrapt in their gutta-percha covering, we see a long pipe, too narrow for water, too wide for gas, inside which every now and then we hear a whiz like the rush of an arrow. This is the pneumatic tube, along which cases full of little parcels are driven by atmospheric pressure. The only other things to be seen (for the journey is rather a dull one) are the shafts, called *regards*, by which the workmen can escape if the sewer gets flooded by heavy rains. As a means of escape, every *regard* has its iron ladder leading to the man-hole in the street. What struck me most was the vaulting of the main sewer. It shone as if covered with chunam, and was so smooth that it carried the voice to a vast distance. There is a whole system of telegraphing which depends on the echo along this vaulting.

How is the main sewer cleaned? There are big barges nearly as wide as the water, each furnished in front with an iron plate fitting almost exactly into the subterranean canal. These plates have each three holes as big as an octavo volume cut in their lower edge. The barges are dragged up stream, and the solid matter is all forced through the three holes, leaving the channel completely free. Each of these barges is calculated to do the work of a hundred men. Where the sewer is too narrow for barges, rails are laid along the footpaths, and trucks furnished with some sort of plates do the work just as well. So swift is the stream, that one never sees a bit of anything floating along; whatever there is, is swept under the surface. But lower a sluice-gate, and stop the current, and within a short time the water will be covered with straws, with dead cats and dogs, with feathers

enough to stuff a score of beds, &c. Corks, too, of which there are great numbers, are caught by a grating before they can escape into the Seine, and after being pared down, are sold to the perfumers. 'Wino-merchants and scent-merchants, are both good trades in Paris,' said our guide, as he explained to us the future use of the corks. If you can get leave to climb up the ladder of one of the *regards*, you will be able to look into one of the narrower sewers without footpath, which pours its unsavoury cataract into the main drain. Sewers of this type have to be kept clean 'by hand.' Somehow, nearly all the six hundred and thirty men employed in the Paris sewers are Gascons 'from the sunny south.' It is a hard life, and men can rarely stand it more than fifteen years. They get pains in their joints, general weakness—what they call *le plomb* (as if their limbs were of lead). 'Sewer-rats' the poor fellows are called; and their only comfort is, that they have waterproof boots, a new pair every six months. The old boots are not thrown away; they are stowed on one of the quays, and when a good many hundred pair are collected, there is a grand auction, and they are sold in lots of a hundred for from a hundred and twenty to a hundred and twenty-five francs. It is almost always the same man who buys them, and he cuts off the feet, and sends them to the bogs up the Oise, where they are used by the peat-cutters; the legs are subjected to a process which turns them into the fine, soft leather. Many a fashionable lady's boots are made of the leather which has first been used by a Gascon scavenger.

Of real sewer-rats, there are comparatively few. They can't work through the hard cement (*chunam*) with which the new sewers are cased. They keep to the old stone-roofed drains; and of course they still abound in the markets and at the abattoirs and knackers' yards. There are many stories of their fierceness, but of these I need not at present say anything.

During the winter of 1870, the Parisians were dreadfully frightened lest the Prussians should get into the drains, and suddenly show themselves in the middle of the city, as Camillus did in Veii. So they actually walled up the main sewer in two or three places, leaving just space enough for one man to squeeze through. These walls were pulled down as soon as the armistice was signed, and were not rebuilt during the Commune, though the Versailles troops, holding Asnières, might have marched in a dozen abreast if they had cared to do so. After the fall of the Commune, the cry was, 'Search the sewers;' and stories got into the papers of bands of desperadoes holding out below, and selling their lives even more dearly than their friends had done above ground. What was there not in the Paris papers at that horrible time? Who is to know the truth? The officials say that not a single human being was found down there. Rifles were found in plenty, not only those dropped down street traps by runaway Communists, but those hidden by quiet citizens, lest the possession of them should bring about a domiciliary visit from the Commune. But more numerous still were the kepis, red sashes and scarfs, cartridge-boxes, &c. of which there was quite a heap under each man-hole in the quarter of the barricades. As the fellows ran off, they got rid of all their badges, hoping thus to escape the savage fury of the Versailles troops.

As I said, there is not much to see in these sewers; nor much to hear, except the plash from the side-drains, and the signals of the workmen, and the occasional thunder of a carriage that rolls over the cast-iron cover of the man-hole. For some time after May 1871, it was the fashion to go down and look round, and with every party there went a detective, according to that wonderful system, whereby, whether under an Empire or a Republic, the French are *surveillés*, no matter where they are or what they are doing. It is not by groping underground, but by studying a map, that one gets a notion of the extent of the sewage, and of what still remains to be done. As far as carrying off the surface-water, Paris is at least as well off as London; to something less than 900,000 yards of public-way, it has close upon 800,000 yards of sewers. But when we come to house-drainage, the difference is startling. Yet, by imitating English usages, the method of floating off refuse from dwellings by water, is getting introduced. In carrying out this novelty, the French had no tidal difficulty; their river-filth was not brought back to their doors twice every twenty-four hours, and left lying on the mudbanks, as was once the case in the Thames. Once in the water, it was carried off by the current; and when the main sewers, right and left, were carried down to Asnières and St-Denis, the city saw nothing more of it. But at the bend of the river by Clichy and St-Ouen, where there is dead-water, the mud soon began to collect in a way to threaten the navigation. Dredging is an expensive process; and it seemed hard to throw away manure worth three-quarters of a million at least, and to have to spend some five thousand pounds a year in getting rid of it. All our talk about sewage-farms, the example of Croydon and of Barking Creek, had 'told' in France, where, moreover, a sort of imperfect 'dry-earth system' had been in use from time immemorial; so not half-a-dozen years ago it was determined to discharge the sewage on the plain of Gennevilliers, instead of throwing it into the river.

This plain, of melancholy interest since the Prussian siege, was otherwise very uninteresting, except, perhaps, to the botanist and the bird-catcher. It was a desert in the midst of the wilderness of market-gardens, with which Paris is surrounded, and not yielding an annual rent of more than thirty shillings an acre. Now what a change has been effected by dispersing rills of sewage over the land! With rent increased to ten pounds an acre, the sewage-gardens of Gennevilliers, as they are called, produce vast crops of the finest vegetables. Three thousand lettuces a day were sent last summer from Gennevilliers to the Paris markets; and as for fruit, there is no end to it, and the size and quality are marvellous.

The process of irrigation is not costly; for instance at the Asnières end, there is a steam-engine of only forty horse-power, which pumps up the sewage into a cast-iron tube; this is carried across the Seine by that well-known picnic place which Parisians call 'L'île Robinson;' and at the Grésillons, this tube, and a similar one from St-Denis, discharge into a reservoir, whence, by a canal and a whole network of trenches, the sewage is distributed over the land. Of course, it has been properly deodorised, and in the deodorising process, the solid matter is all precipitated, much as if you were fining wine. Diluted sulphate of alumina is the deodoriser; and a quart of this is enough to purify

two thousand quarts of liquid manure. The water, when not wanted for the land, is allowed to run off into the Seine; it is perfectly pure, though, before purifying, it had contained some thirty per cent. of organic matter. No better manure can be found than the solid matter thus precipitated; indeed, the plain of Gennevilliers just now has been compared to Egypt, which, fertile above all belief, as far as the Nile mud reaches, changes suddenly to absolute barrenness where that mud does not extend.

Frenchmen are beginning to ask why the system so singularly successful at Gennevilliers should not be tried all over the country. We may well ask the same question in England. Even if we are to become before long one great cattle-farm, we shall still need market-gardens to supply our 'manufacturing centres;' and if, by-and-by, instead of polluting our rivers, we put our sewage, properly managed, on the land, we may find ourselves able, in spite of higher wages, to grow corn at a profit. It can never be safe for us, any more than it was for old Rome, to give up corn-growing. While we are masters at sea, we shall always be able to bring in some foreign corn, even with a big war on hand; but it would not be pleasant to have to trust wholly to that mode of supply. As for wholesomeness, there is all the difference in the world between deluging our grass with sewage-water in its foul state, and using, instead of guano, the solid matter obtained by chemical precipitation. No taint can survive the processes of growth and nourishment which go on while the plant is coming to maturity. If our milk did suffer, it was not because the cows ate sewage-grown grass, but because they got into a diseased state through licking the sewage-water off the herbage. The French plan is open to no such objection, and I hope to see it more and more adopted here at home. Why should we throw away millions on millions every year in a way which fouls our rivers, nay, even our little streams? It is the little streams (as every tourist in the north knows) which suffer most. They are polluted with sewage, they are poisoned with the refuse of all sorts of works. Glue-boiling, soap-boiling, white-lead making, gas-making, dyeing—all these poison our fish, and make the pretty north country 'becks' fetid and disgusting; and this very refuse, properly treated, is nearly as good for the land as animal manure; it all contains phosphoric acid, lime, and the other ingredients which ought to be, but often are not, in the high-priced artificial manures.

Parisian sewage as it is only dates from 1855. The terrible cholera epidemics of 1832 and 1849 had proved that something must be done; but what was then done was only the first step; it can only be completed by an immense extension of what is going on at Gennevilliers; just as our London work will not be accomplished till Oxford, Reading, Richmond, and the intervening townlets all 'utilise' their sewage, instead of making the river their cesspool. Apprehensions of cholera from foetid exhalations and bad drainage will be seen to have had much to do with the grand system of sewage, and enrichment of lands of which we have been speaking. In their eagerness, the French have already outdone the English as regards the cleansing of the Seine, and we doubt not the improvement will soon be carried out in some other parts of France. The polluted condi-

tion of the Clyde has long been a scandal. Why do the intelligent inhabitants of Glasgow not take a lesson from what has been effected by the Parisians?

TWILIGHT DREAMS.

They come in the quiet twilight hour,
When the weary day is done,
And the quick light leaps from the glowing heaps
Of wood, on the warm hearth-stone.

When the household sounds have died away,
And the rooms are silent all,
Save the clock's brief tick, and the sudden click
Of the embers as they fall;

They come, those dreams of the twilight hour,
To me, with their noiseless tread,
A tearful band, by the guiding hand
Of a grave-eyed spirit led.

There is no voice within the hall,
No footstep on the floor,
The children's laughter is hushed, there is
No hand at the parlour door.

Like fingers tapping eagerly
Against the shuttered frame,
Where the trailing rose its long branch throws,
Beat the great drops of rain.

But my heart heeds not the rustling leaves,
Nor the rain-fall's fitful beat,
Nor the wind's low sigh, as it hurries by
On its pauseless path and fleet;

For now in the dusk, they gather round,
The visions of the past,
Arising slow, in the dim red glow,
By the burning pine-brands cast.

My brow is calmed as with the touch
Of an angel's passing wing;
They breathe no word, yet my soul is stirred
By the messages they bring.

Some, in their grasp impalpable,
Bear Eden-cultured flowers,
That sprang in gloom, from the tear-bathed tomb
Of hope's long-buried hours.

Some from the fount of memory,
Lasting, and pure, and deep,
Bring waters clear, though many a year
Hath saddened their first fresh sweep;

And some in their hands of shadow bear,
From the shrine of prayerful thought,
A fragrance blest, to the stricken breast,
With balm and healing fraught.

The night wears on, the hearth burns low,
The dreams have passed away;
But heart and brow are strengthened now
For the toil of coming day.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 534.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

DICKENS' LIFE:

CONCLUSION.

THE Life of Charles Dickens, as written by Mr Forster, has appeared in detachments—not the most satisfactory way of presenting a biography. What was contained in the first and second volumes of the work has been already noticed in these pages; and we now proceed to say something of the third and concluding volume, which has recently made its appearance.

In this last volume, the biographer glances at what he could not well escape, the painful incident of Dickens putting away his wife and mother of his children, for no other assigned reason than mutual incompatibility of feeling. The discovery of this incompatibility must be allowed to have come rather late in the day. The circumstance is one with which no properly constituted mind can sympathise, more particularly when it is known, as we happen to know, that Mrs Dickens is a person of amiable temperament, lady-like in manners, and wholly irreproachable in her life and conversation. We say it sorrowfully, this affair, which Dickens ostentatiously, and even offensively obtruded on public notice, forms, with concurrent and well-known circumstances, the sad blot on his character. How a man with so many good qualities should have so conducted himself, has appeared almost inexplicable. His behaviour is perhaps significant of the mental peculiarity, that in virtue of his acknowledged abilities he considered himself entitled to do as he liked in matters which are usually regulated by a certain prescribed canon of decency and propriety. Surely no apology can be offered for what is in effect a public outrage, a blazoned defiance of all ordinary rules of conduct, for such was his treatment of his wife. Nor is it well that the greatest distinction in literature or art—any amount of popularity—should be pleaded as an exemption from the plain rules of moral and social responsibility. If there be any extenuation, it is, that Dickens was in a degree intoxicated with universal applause, as well as spoiled by

the sycophants who hung about him, and sanctioned his vagaries. A certain 'restlessness of character' may likewise have had something to do with it. I am 'very human,' he acknowledged in the speech he made before departing for America. Accepting that meagre avowal of infirmity, we gladly drop the subject.

In the third volume of the Life, Mr Forster, we think, dwells too much on what this and that critic has said of Dickens' works. Who cares for these criticisms, or even for glowing eulogies on writings with which the world has long ago made up its mind? So sensitive was Dickens with respect to the feelings of others, that when he had painted a certain grotesque little oddity of his acquaintance (safe, as he imagined, from recognition) in Miss Moucher, and she wrote to him to complain of it, his grief and pain were excessive. Not only did he strive to shew her how all his characters were composite—that is, made out of many people—and never individual, and that in her own case this was as marked as in others, but, when she still remained unsatisfied as respects the moral characteristics attributed to her fancy portrait, he altered his whole scheme as respected it, so that nothing but an agreeable impression was left. In all Dickens' works there are indeed but three instances in which a personal likeness can be said to have been intended, though in a hundred cases the truth to nature may have suggested such. These are Mr Fang, the police magistrate; the alderman who meant 'to put down suicide;' and Harold Skimpole. The last case is the only one in which any harm was done, or, if punishment was inflicted on the other two (which seems unlikely, for the originals had hides of iron), it was richly deserved. As a rule, Dickens was careful not to offend in this way in proportion to the immense temptation that beset him to do so. 'A dreadful thought occurs to me,' he writes, in allusion to a common friend—'How brilliant in a book!' But in the particular case of Leigh Hunt, the temptation proved irresistible. Under the name of Harold Skimpole, he was reproduced to the life, with all his 'airy gaieties' and incapacity for business matters

portrayed as faithfully as features in a photograph. Dickens loved the man, as all who knew him loved him, and his apology was tender and characteristic. Wanting certain fascinating foibles for the man he had invented, he confesses that those of Hunt occurred to him, and 'for the pleasure it afforded me, as I have since often grieved to think, to find a delightful manner reproducing itself under my hand, I yielded to the temptation of too often making the character speak like my old friend.' It is quite possible, indeed, that the evil qualities of Skimpole may have been painted in darker colours in order to make the *unlikeness* more visible. Nobody who knew Hunt could have identified him with *them*; only, unfortunately, those who did not know him heard that the picture was intended for him, and accepted it as a portrait in all its details. Of the novel in which it figures, *Bleak House*, one character, that of the crossing-sweeper Jo, seems to have made the deepest pathetic impression of any he created. 'To my mind,' wrote the late Dean Ramsay of Edinburgh, 'nothing in the field of fiction is to be found in English literature surpassing the death of Jo.'

In 1855-56, Dickens resided in Paris, from which he sends the most charming descriptions of social life. He was superintending there the publication of the French edition of what M. Hachette, the bookseller, would term his Romances, and, of course, met every person of distinction. At Scribe's, the dramatist, he was entertained very frequently; a man with a splendid fortune, made by his pen, and yet as anxious to get away from his table to see one of his own pieces brought out on the stage, as though it had been his first instead of his *four hundredth*. Auber—'a stolid little elderly man with a petulant manner,' who told Dickens he had once lived at Stock Noonton (Stoke Newington) to study English, but had forgotten it all—was a frequent guest at Scribe's. When Louis-Philippe presented him to the Queen, she said: 'We are such old acquaintances through M. Auber's works, that an introduction is quite unnecessary.' Lamartine, who always spoke of Dickens as *un des grands amis de son imagination*, he describes as 'highly prepossessing, and with a sort of calm passion about him, very taking indeed.' At Madame Viardot's (the sister of Malibran), Dickens met George Sand. 'I suppose it to be impossible to imagine anything more unlike my preconceptions than the illustrious Sand. . . . Just the kind of woman in appearance whom you might suppose to be the Queen's monthly nurse.'

Of the famous Emile de Girardin and his entertainments, he thus writes: 'No man unacquainted with my determination never to embellish or fancify such accounts could believe in the description I shall let off when we meet of dining at Emile Girardin's—of the three gorgeous drawing-rooms, with ten thousand wax-candles in golden sconces, terminating in a dining-room of unprecedented magnificence, with two enormous transparent plate-glass doors in it, looking (across an ante-chamber full of

clean plates) straight into the kitchen, with the cooks in their white paper-caps dishing the dinner. From his seat in the midst of the table, the host (like a giant in a fairy story) beholds the kitchen, and the snow-white tables, and the profound order and silence there prevailing. Forth from the plate-glass doors issues the banquet—the most wonderful feast ever tasted by mortal; at the present price of truffles, that article alone costing (for eight people) at least five pounds. On the table are ground glass jugs of peculiar construction, laden with the finest growth of champagne and the coolest ice. With the third course is issued port wine (previously unheard of in a good state on this continent), which would fetch two guineas a bottle at any sale. The dinner done, oriental flowers in vases of golden cobweb are placed upon the board. With the ice is issued brandy, buried for a hundred years. To that succeeds coffee, brought by the brother of one of the *convives* from the remotest East, in exchange for an equal quantity of Californian gold-dust. . . . All this time the host perpetually repeats: "Ce petit dîner ci n'est que pour faire la connaissance de Monsieur Dickens; il ne compte pas; ce n'est rien." And even now I have forgotten to set down half of it—in particular, the item of a far larger plum-pudding than ever was seen in England at Christmas-time, served with a celestial sauce, in colour like the orange blossom, and in substance like the blossom powdered and bathed in dew, and called in the *carte* (*carte* in a gold frame like a little fish-slice to be handed about): "Hommage à l'illustre écrivain d'Angleterre." That illustrious man staggered out at the last drawing-room door, speechless with wonder, finally; and even at that moment his host, holding to his lips a chalice set with precious stones, and containing nectar distilled from the air that blew over the fields of beans in bloom for fifteen summers, remarked: "Le dîner que nous avons eu, mon cher, n'est rien—il ne compte pas—il a été tout-à-fait en famille—il faut dîner (en vérité, dîner) bientôt. Au plaisir! Au revoir! Au dîner!"

At this wonderful table, Dickens met equally wonderful people; among them a little man, who, eight years previously, was a shoeblack, reputed to be the richest man in France, having ascended with rapidity up the usual ladder of the Bourse. 'By merely observing that perhaps he might come down again, I clouded so many faces as to render it clear to me that *everybody present* was at the same game for some stake or other. Such crashes have to be staved off every week as have not been seen since Law's time.' But the most charming letters which this volume contains are without doubt those written from Boulogne. 'My house here is on a great hillside, backed up by woods of young trees. It faces the Haute Ville, with the ramparts and the unfinished cathedral, which capital object is exactly opposite the windows. On the slope in front, going steep down to the right, all Boulogne is piled and jumbled about in a very picturesque manner. The view is charming—closed in at last by the tops of swelling hills; and the door is within ten minutes of the post-office, and within a quarter of an hour of the sea. The garden is made in terraces up the hillside, like an Italian garden, the top walks being in the before-mentioned woods.

The best part of it begins at the level of the house, and goes up at the back a couple of hundred feet, perhaps. There are at present thousands of roses all about the house, and no end of other flowers. There are five great summer-houses, and (I think) fifteen fountains—not one of which (according to the invariable French custom) over plays. The house is a doll's house of many rooms; it is one story high, with eight-and-thirty steps up and down—tribune-wise—to the front door—the noblest French demonstration I have ever seen, I think. Besides a picture of this house in the dining-room, there was a plan of the property (his landlord always called it 'the property') in the hall. 'It looks about the size of Ireland; and to every one of the extraordinary objects there is a reference with some portentous name. There are fifty-one such references, including the Cottage of Tom Thunb, the Bridge of Austerlitz, the Bridge of Jena, the Hermitage, the Bower of the Old Guard, the Labyrinth (I have no idea which is which); and there is guidance to every room in the house, as if it were a place on that stupendous scale that, without such a clue, you must infallibly lose your way, and perhaps perish of starvation between bedroom and bedroom.'

On the pier at Boulogne, Dickens saw a shabby-looking man, who, in taking leave of a certain generous Englishman about to go on board the packet, observed: 'I shall not have a good dinner again till you come back.' This was Hudson, once the Railway King.

Of the serial which he was writing about this time, an anecdote is recorded, which may be termed historical. When Bismarck and Jules Favre met under the walls of Paris, on pretence of finding some basis of negotiation, there was a third man with them, Von Moltke, who took no part in the discussion, but occupied himself in reading *Little Dorrit*. 'Who can doubt,' observes Mr Forster, 'that the chapter on *How not to do it* was then absorbing the old soldier's attention?'

The book before us is so immense that it is hardly possible to do more than pick out some of the plums, to give a sample to our readers of its general richness. Of the extent of the influence of his writings and of their effect upon even the most rugged souls, the following is a curious instance. 'Twelve or thirteen years ago,' writes an American gentleman to Mr Forster, 'I crossed the Sierra Nevada mountains as a government surveyor under a famous frontiersman and civil engineer—Colonel Lander. We were too early by a month, and became snow-bound just on the very summit. Under these circumstances it was necessary to abandon the wagons for a time, and drive the stock (mules) down the mountains to the valleys where there was a pasturage and running water. This was a long and difficult task, occupying several days. On the second day, in a spot where we expected to find nothing more human than a grizzly bear or an elk, we found a little hut, built of pine-boughs and a few rough boards clumsily hewn out of small trees with an axe. The hut was covered with snow many feet deep, excepting only the hole in the roof which served for a chimney, and a small pit-like place in front to permit egress. The occupant came forth to hail us and solicit whisky and tobacco. He was dressed in a suit made entirely of flour-sacks, and was curiously labelled on various parts of his person. "Best family flour, extra." His

head was covered by a wolf's skin drawn from the brute's head—with the ears standing erect in a fierce alert manner. He was a most extraordinary object, and told us he had not seen a human being for four months. He lived on bear and elk meat and flour, laid in during his short summer. Emigrants in the season paid him a kind of ferry-toll. I asked him how he passed his time, and he went to a barrel and produced *Nicholas Nickleby* and *Pickwick*. I found he knew them almost by heart. He did not know, or seem to care, about the author; but he gloried in Sam Weller, despised Squeers, and would probably have taken the latter's scalp with great skill and cheerfulness. For Mr Winkle he had no feeling but contempt, and, in fact, regarded a fowling-piece as only a toy for a squaw. He had no Bible; and perhaps if he practised in his rude savage way all Dickens taught, he might less have felt the want even of that companion. Of Dickens' success with more polished readers, it will be sufficient to say that an American publisher thought it worth his while to give him, for *George Silverman's Explanation* and *A Holiday Romance*, which, combined, only occupied the space of one-half of his monthly numbers, and which took him only a few days to compose, the sum of a thousand pounds.

One statement will appear to many of Dickens' hearers as very surprising. During the latter course of his readings, he learned them all by heart, so as to have no mechanical drawback in looking for the words. 'I have tested,' says he, 'all the serious passion in them by everything I know; made the humorous points much more humorous; corrected my utterance of certain words; cultivated a self-possession not to be disturbed; and made myself master of the situation.' It is no wonder that he took such pains with what was bearing for him more golden fruit than even the most popular of his writings; and this, too, in England only, which was destined in this matter to fall short indeed of the Hesperian crop that awaited him in America. At first, it was Australia that seemed likely to secure his services—an offer of ten thousand pounds having been made to him to read there for eight months; but in the end he decided upon America, and though even still better terms were there proposed to him, to take the risk of the undertaking solely upon his own shoulders. The event more than justified his choice. During the six months he remained on the other side of the Atlantic, notwithstanding the enormous expenses (upwards of thirteen thousand pounds) incidental to his readings, he cleared no less a sum than twenty thousand pounds! The chief difficulty of his agent was to dispose of the tickets to legitimate purchasers, for though he made it a rule never to sell more than six to any one person, the speculators hired men to buy for them, and made it almost impossible to hear him without paying such prices as seem fabulous. In many cases five pounds were paid for a three-dollar seat. Let one scene suffice for all: "At Brooklyn, I am going to read in Mr Ward Beecher's chapel, the only building there available for the purpose. You must understand that Brooklyn is a kind of sleeping-place for New York, and is supposed to be a great place in the money way. We let the seats pew by pew! the pulpit is taken down for my screen and gas! and I appear out of the vestry in canonical form! These ecclesiastical entertainments come off on the

evenings of the 16th, 17th, 20th, and 21st of the present month." His first letter after returning to New York (9th of January), made additions to the Brooklyn picture. "Each evening an enormous ferry-boat will convey me and my state-carriage (not to mention half-a-dozen wagons, and any number of people, and a few score of horses), across the river to Brooklyn, and will bring me back again. The sale of tickets there was an amazing scene. The noble army of speculators are now furnished (this is literally true, and I am quite serious), each man, with a straw mattress, a little bag of bread and meat, two blankets, and a bottle of whisky. With this outfit, they lie down in line on the pavement the whole of the night before the tickets are sold; generally taking up their position at about ten. It being severely cold at Brooklyn, they made an immense bonfire in the street—a narrow street of wooden houses—which the police turned out to extinguish. A general fight then took place; from which the people farthest off in the line rushed bleeding when they saw any chance of ousting others nearer the door, put their mattresses in the spots so gained, and held on by the iron rails. At eight in the morning Dolby appeared with the tickets in a portmanteau. He was immediately saluted with a roar of 'Halloa! Dolby! So Charley has let you have the carriage, has he, Dolby? How is he, Dolby? Don't drop the tickets, Dolby! Look alive, Dolby! &c.' in the midst of which he proceeded to business, and concluded (as usual) by giving universal dissatisfaction." At no reading did he clear less than three hundred and fifteen pounds, while at New York the net profits sometimes reached five hundred pounds. Upon the whole, it may be calculated that his readings in America and England must have realised for him little less than forty-five thousand pounds. It is not too much to say, however, that in the end they cost him his life. The fatigue, incident to these dramatic performances—for such they really were—was enormous, and the reserve of strength upon which they drew was small. The 'restlessness' which was always 'driving' him to new excitements, was doubtless but a symptom of the disease at work within him; while his want of rest would of itself have destroyed a man of a less vigorous frame. His panacea for it was to get up and tire himself out by exercise, and this he would do sometimes by leaving his bed at two in the morning after a hard day's work, and walking thirty miles into the country before breakfast! For years and years he suffered from a dreadful pain in his foot, which Sir Henry Thompson in vain pointed out to him was a warning not to be disregarded; and even when his eyesight began to play him false, he could not be convinced but that it was owing to some temporary derangement, but walked, and read, and wrote to his uttermost, as usual.

Dickens was popular to the last, both as a writer and a reader. *Edwin Drood*, the book on which he was finally engaged, and which he left unfinished, was bought by the Fifty Thousand as it left his fingers; and of his last Christmas number, there were sold no less than 255,280 copies. That he was the best letter-writer that England has yet seen, is as certain as that he was one of its best speakers, actors, and readers of modern times.

With the circumstances of his death, and how all England mourned it, very literally, from the Queen to the peasant, our readers must need be well

acquainted. Through dint of hard brain-work, he may be said to have perished before his time. He suddenly sunk on the evening of June 9, 1870, passing away at the age of fifty-eight years and four months.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER XIII.—DISENCHANTMENT.

RICHARD MILBANK did not return to Rosebank either that day or the next, and by that time all Hilton knew it. His disappearance, though by no means mysterious, since he had announced his intention to depart, was a much debated topic. At the *Sans Souci*, among the older members, there was a good deal of lifting of eyebrows and shaking of heads: 'There was something more behind, you might depend upon it, which would not be long in coming out.' The less prudent prophets even entreated their friends, in whispers, to mark their words: 'It would be presently discovered that John Milbank was "let in" for a heap of money' through his scapegrace brother. The younger men were (as they imagined) more charitable: it was their openly expressed opinion that Dick had been signalled elsewhere by the flutter of a petticoat, and that they would see him back again in ten days, or a fortnight at farthest. He was impressionable, but his fervour was apt to cool within a very limited time. In the meanwhile, he was much missed, and genuinely regretted, in the card-room, notwithstanding that he had left no debts behind him. His handsome face had been pleasant to look upon, his reckless talk had had a genial glow about it, though but too often from forbidden fires. Some even held him as witty as old Roberts, though he had not that dry manner with him which makes a little joke go such a long way. It was agreed on all hands that Dennis Blake knew more about Milbank's whereabouts than he chose to tell, and he was cross-examined accordingly; and since he was foolish enough to take this in ill part, it was persisted in.

'Is it true, Deunny, that you have quite ruined him, and given him back a little money, to take him beyond seas—as they say old Crockford used to do for his victims?'

'No, no,' said another; 'Blake would never do that. His favourite goose having laid its last golden egg, he has killed him, and sold the body.'

Whereupon, the economist referred to would seowl and mutter, and, in his excessive irritation, even play a wrong card. This he could ill afford to do, for, now that Dick was gone, he got very little plunder, but, on the contrary, like the ringed pelican, had daily to disgorge to others the prey that he had laboriously collected for his own benefit.

Outside the club, Richard was missed also, in many quarters. Tradesmen of all sorts—tailors, bootmakers, horsedealers—were making the most anxious inquiries about him. A jeweller wrote to Mr Thorne to inform him that a golden cross set with turquoises, that his daughter was wearing, and which had come out of his establishment, had not been paid for. To have to return a love-gift under these circumstances was 'rubbing the gilt off' with a vengeance, but Maggie complied with the suggestion without a murmur. It was thought a hard thing by the jeweller that John

Milbank did not offer to pay for it, which Thorne was by no means in a position to do.

As time went on, and still no news came of the missing man, public opinion set in against his brother upon this account—that he did not pay Richard's debts; though, as a matter of fact, he had not the money. His business, for the present, was crippled, and indeed was going on on credit, though there was little doubt of its eventual recovery.

Thorne did not hesitate to tell his daughter of all this; but he might have spared his breath; while her Richard was absent, and his fate unknown, all talk to his disparagement was wasted. She did not believe that he had gone away from her of his own free will, but feared for his personal safety; and while such an anxiety was on her mind, what mattered tradesmen's bills!

At last a day arrived which was destined to give her father a tremendous advantage.

'Maggie,' said he one morning, as they were at their work together, 'what would make you believe that Richard had given you up?'

She was so pale now that she could scarcely grow paler; but instead of pursuing her occupation, as it was her wont to do when the engraver pressed this theme, she desisted from it at once; her trembling fingers had refused their office.

'You have some news, father; what is it?'

'That cheque has been paid into the London bank.'

'I don't understand,' said she faintly: she did understand, poor soul, being well enough acquainted with such matters.

'Why, the hundred pounds that John gave to his brother on the night of his departure. It was an open cheque, but payable to order; and it has just come in with Richard's signature on the back of it. A man must be alive, you know, to sign a cheque. It is plain, therefore, that Richard is alive.'

'Thank God,' murmured Maggie humbly; but it was not a fervent ejaculation: the alternative, indeed, was not in her case to be fervently welcomed.

'It was very stupid of John,' continued the engraver, 'not to stop the cheque; but I suppose he was afraid of offending his brother. He has already telegraphed, it seems; and the reply from the bank is that it was presented by a stranger; so there is no clue. Only the fact is now certain that Richard is alive, and, for reasons of his own—and I have no doubt very good ones—has no wish to have any communication with you.'

There was a long pause, then Maggie said: 'Can I see the cheque?'

'It is here, my child; I asked John to send it for your own satisfaction.'

Her satisfaction! Does the ship-captain use that phrase when he writes to tell some widowed mother that her only lad has perished in the pitiless sea! If Richard had really signed that cheque, he was not dead indeed, but it was almost certain proof that he had deserted her. She took it from her father, and with practised and tearless eye examined the endorsement. It was her lover's—or what once had been her lover's—hand: no forger could have ever deceived her there.

'Are you convinced at last, my poor lassie?' inquired the engraver tenderly.

'That Richard signed this cheque? Yes, father.'

'And does not the other thing follow—that he has given you up? Or will nothing ever make you believe that?'

'Nothing; unless I hear it from his own lips.' She rose, and walked slowly to the door; then dragged herself up-stairs to her own room; and having shut herself in, dropped into a chair, and burst into a passion of tears.

'O Richard, Richard, you are breaking a heart that only beats for you!'

She came down an hour afterwards and resumed her work as though nothing had happened; her eyes, her ears, were quick as ever, but all that they took in shaped itself with reference to her lost lover: the 'perishable' ink, in experiments with which her father chanced to be engaged that morning, reminded her of Richard's vows; so fixed and stable to all seeming, and yet so unstable and fleeting; nay, the parallel was even more complete, for in neither case was there any fading away, but, in a moment, all was blank on heart and paper. The very wintry wind that huddled the snow against the window-pane seemed to breath cold farewells, not from the grave, but worse, from lips estranged!

Herbert Thorne knew nothing of such thoughts. He had forgotten, or perhaps had never known, what grief women are capable of concealing; what mortal wounds they will hide from kith and kin, rather than confess their pain, when a once-loved hand has inflicted them. When Maggie said that she would never credit that Richard had forsaken her till he told her so himself, her father had believed her.

If this man should die, then, she would be a mourner for him through all her youthful days; and if he lived, and should return to claim her promise, she would be a mourner still—for her own sake. Beneath the engraver's methodical manner and outspoken ways, there lay a heart, limited, indeed, in the sphere of its affections, but tender as a girl's towards all it did love, and that all was Maggie. He had borne misfortune, disappointment in his most cherished hopes, and bitter humiliations in his calling, without a murmur; but they had set their mark upon his being: he felt old age creeping on apace, and something worse than old age; he had had warnings, unrevealed to Maggie, but which a doctor had translated for him, that a day might come, even before the appointed Fatal One, when his deft fingers should ply no more their busy work; when blessed Toil should no more offer its cup of Lethe; when he should be no longer the bread-winner, but only the bread-eater. It had been his one desire to see his daughter placed on some safe coign of vantage—the wife of some well-to-do and honest man, so that the wave of Want should never reach her, and chill her with its spray, when he himself should be powerless to avert it. And now this modest hope lay shattered within him. Maggie was thoroughly resolved to sacrifice herself to an idol, with front of brass and feet of clay—to throw herself away upon a selfish reprobate. He had felt very bitter about it, as well as sad, but the bitterness was over now, and the sadness had turned to blank despair. If he had told her all this, she would perhaps have flung her arms about him, and confessed her error. But he was reticent by habit, and besides, too worn and broken in spirit to risk a new repulse. Silence may be golden, but

how many a life has been worse than lost, when one word of nature's promptings would have saved it!

It was Maggie's custom every afternoon to repair to Rosebank, generally in her father's company, about the time when John returned home from business to inquire if there were any news of Richard; and at the usual hour, she rose, and put on her shawl and bonnet.

'Won't you go with me, father? I am sure you have been working long enough; you look tired and pale. It has ceased snowing, and the fresh air will do you good.'

'Not to-day, Maggie.'

His words were always few, and decisive; but if her thoughts had not been elsewhere—hoping against hope that John might have something comforting to tell her—she would have noticed that his tone was very tremulous. When she left the house, he went to the window, and followed her with his eyes to the corner of the street; then sighing, resumed his seat, but not his toil. He sat him down to think—but to think was to be full of sorrows and leaden-eyed despairs. We lavish our pity, both in life and books, upon the disappointments of youth and the unhappiness of lovers; but we ought to reserve it rather for those who, without the strength of youth to support them, have lost not only happiness, but hope itself.

Maggie was a rapid walker, and when she had cleared the town, she saw before her on the road a woman going in the same direction: her steps were slow because of some burden that she carried, and she seemed to progress with difficulty. Where could she be going, thought Maggie, so late in the dull dark afternoon, and when the laden clouds were menacing more snow so unmistakably? At each of the scattered villas on the way, she expected to see her stop, and it was with genuine compassion that she observed her pass by the last, save Rosebank itself, whereby she knew she must be bound on a long journey. By this time she had overtaken her, and perceived that she was about her own age, and very pretty, but painfully delicate, and evidently of frail and feeble frame. Her breast was the cradle of a little babe, whose peevish cries she was vainly endeavouring to soothe.

'I hope you are not going far this bitter evening?', said Maggie kindly.

'I am not going far,' echoed the girl sullenly, and huddling her cloak about her, as though with some vague intention of concealing her living burden.

The movement was not lost upon Maggie, who hurried on, and presently reached Rosebank. As she turned to enter the gate, she looked back, and saw that the girl had stopped also. Perhaps she had meant to beg at the cottage, and would now be deterred from doing so by seeing her enter? Maggie glanced at the threatening sky, and her heart smote her for the evanescence of her pity for this poor creature and her innocent child; and, instead of ringing the bell, she walked hastily back and addressed her.

'Did you want anything, my good girl?' said she. 'I am known at yonder house, and can procure you there, at least, a meal, if you stand in need of it.'

'I am not hungry, thank you,' was the cold reply.

'But see! it has already begun to snow again;

will you not step in for shelter till the storm is over?'

'I am used to bad weather—and worse!' answered the girl, with a trembling of the lips that was meant for a cynical smile.

'But your child?' urged Maggie tenderly.

The girl burst into tears. 'Yes; my child has a right to shelter in that house,' answered she with vehemence; 'and I am going there to claim it.'

'Of whom?' inquired Maggie faintly.

'Of its father. You say you are known there. Can you tell me, then, whether Mr Milbank has returned?'

'Mr Milbank!' Maggie's heart felt like a stone; her limbs trembled beneath her. 'Which Mr Milbank?'

'Are there two?' answered the girl simply.

'I only know of one. I have not seen him for weeks, nay, months; and I have been ill and weak, and dared not write, and now they tell me he has gone away, no one knows whither.'

'Do you mean Richard Milbank?'

'O yes. Who else? You are known at Rosebank, you say, and must know him.'

'Yes; I know him,' answered Maggie gravely.

It had taken her years to do so, but the recognition had come at last: he stood before her a faithless breaker of women's hearts.

'Have I done mischief?' cried the girl in affrighted tones. 'Are you his sister, that you look so pained and angry?'

'No; I am nothing to him, nor he to me.'

'But you can tell me if it is true that he has left us—his babe, the very image of himself—look you!' She drew her cloak aside, that Maggie might look upon the child; and she did so, but with such a hard and searching gaze, that the girl shrunk back from her, exclaiming: 'You would not hurt him?'

'God forbid!' said Maggie hoarsely.

'Ah, you are kind, and would not tread us under foot, as some do. I am a sinful girl, but then I loved him so, and he loved me, or else he is perjured.' Then, with haggard face and eager eyes, she added: 'Is he really gone? Can he have deserted us for ever, think you?'

'It is possible,' answered Maggie slowly. 'He has deserted others.'

'Nay; but not like me and this one. He was his father, and he should have been my husband; a score of times he vowed to marry me. I would not come here begging to his door, to shame him thus, but for his own child's sake; for if the mother starve, the babe must die.'

'You shall not starve,' said Maggie.

'Will his people, yonder, help us, think you?'

'I don't know. You must not go there: come back with me, and shew me where you live.'

'It is a very poor place,' hesitated the other: 'they have turned us out of the rooms he took for me.'

'No matter how poor it be, let me see it.' And yielding to her stronger will, the sobbing girl turned back towards the town.

Within an hour of leaving her father's house, Maggie stood once more before its door; but in that time a revolution had taken place within her mind that years of ordinary events could not have effected. It was as if to the wound of which she had languished the actual cautery had been suddenly applied, and though still suffering tortures, she felt in a manner cured. To think that all the

while Richard had been paying his vows to her, and protesting his fidelity, he had been promising marriage to another, was a reflection that turned her wholesome blood to gall. The very remembrance of his caresses was hateful to her, now that she knew that they had been lavished elsewhere. Ignorant of the world, though so sagacious in more than one of its useful callings, his infidelity appeared to her something monstrous and abnormal. Had her position in life been a more lowly one, or if it had been higher, or if her bringing-up, even in her own condition, had been less exceptional, she would have been spared the shock of this revelation, and also, perhaps, would have missed its lesson; but her knowledge of life was as inferior to that of most girls of her own age as her intelligence was superior. How different she was from them may be best gathered from the fact, that as soon as the sudden passion-flush had passed, and reason had time to assert itself within her, she forgave her unconscious rival, or rather confessed to herself that she had nothing to forgive. Her first impulse had been to get the girl away from Rosebank, in order to save herself from a public mortification; but her honest heart had since been moved towards her with genuine pity. If she herself had been deceived by Richard—against whom every voice was warning her—was this poor girl to be blamed for having become his victim? Nay, if her tale was true, might not Richard, had it not been for her own sake—she would not say 'for the love of her,' for she now ignored it—have redressed her wrong, and married her, so that in a manner was not she herself to blame for this poor girl's desertion? Henceforth, at all events, she would do her best to serve her and her innocent child. In good actions, it has been said, the most wretched of mankind can find some comfort; our own cup of bitterness seems not so bitter when we strive to make that of others more palatable. Moreover, terrible as was this revelation to herself, the effects of it, she could not but reflect, would be welcome to her father, to whose loving appeals she had hitherto refused to listen; she would henceforward make up for her undutifulness by obedience to his every wish; indeed, for the future, what wishes could she over entertain not in accordance with his own! Side by side, they would work together, undissociated by any secret thought: she would give herself heart and soul to him, sympathise with his aims, second them all she could, and if they should be successful, strive to find some happiness in his triumph.

Reader, has it not sometimes happened to you, when you have had occasion to resolve particularly upon a course of conduct, when your plans are laid, and the circumstances for which they are prepared lie, as it seems, plainly before you—the same as they did yesterday, and the day before, without a hint of change—that all this forethought has gone for nothing, or only for what thought is worth which can never be put in practice. Does it not seem, I say, as though Fate were jealous of feeble man's proposals, and resolute to flout them? While Maggie has her hand upon the door of home, where all that happens is known to her so well, and goes on with such methodical iteration, an empty carriage drives swiftly up to it, and stops. 'Is this Mr Thorne's house, please, miss?' asks the coachman.

'Yes,' says she, surprised, but not alarmed; why

should she be? 'Have you any message for him?'

'No, miss; but I have got my orders to wait here for my master, Dr Naylor, who has been summoned to see him.'

'Summoned to see him! What about?' cried Maggie, ringing nervously at the bell.

'Well, I don't rightly know, miss; but the man from the chemist's shop came running down to us, ten minutes ago, to say as Mr Thorne in Mitchell Street was took with a stroke. He told our cook it was summut of paralysis.'

CHAPTER XIV.—STRUCK DOWN.

We hear much of the contrasts between rich and poor, and, Heaven knows, they are sharply defined and unmistakable enough; but there is another contrast not so defined, and therefore not so patent, in the social positions of our fellow-men, but which in the end is often as deplorable. This is caused by the presence, or absence, of what is vulgarly termed 'an independence'; that is, the possession of some sum of money, small or great, which is their own, and on which they can fall back upon for support in case of need. The barrister in good practice lives, during the holidays, next neighbour, at some seaside resort, to the country gentleman, who has chanced to bring his wife and children to the same place. The way of living of their two families is almost identical; you would set them down as being in the enjoyment of somewhat similar incomes; and very likely it may be so. Yet the difference between their pecuniary positions is in reality as great, perhaps greater than that which exists between the barrister and the humble lodging-house keeper of whose apartments he is the temporary tenant. For, if he sickens, or his practice falls away, poverty and want soon begin to press him sore; while, if he dies, ruin too often seizes upon those he has so tenderly nurtured, only to feel their fate the harder when it thus befalls. On the other hand, should the country gentleman decease, his girls have only his personal loss to deplore; it is not the prop of the house that has been snatched away from them; in the matter of material prosperity, they are as they were; while the daughters of their neighbour are no more their equals, but will have to work for scanty pay, for strangers, from youth to age. The occurrence is so common, that it excites but little remark. 'I see Brown of the Chancery Bar, or Brown the doctor, or Brown the vicar (as the case may be), is dead,' we say: 'I fear those nice girls of his will be left but badly off.'

Yet, but yesterday, Brown, to all outward seeming, was as prosperous as his friend Brown the county magistrate, and it would have been the height of presumption to pity his girls. Of course folks say: 'Why did he not insure his life?' and probably to some small extent—less than he should have done, but not much less, perhaps, considering what responsibility he would have incurred in undertaking a great premium—he did insure it. At all events, that little provision does but serve to break the fall of the suddenly descending Browns.

This reflection, indeed, would sadden us more if the downfall was less sudden and complete, since as it is they all go 'under,' as it were,

immediately; the ranks of society close up, and little or nothing more is heard of them, unless, indeed, one of their number happens to be fortunate enough to be taken into the family circle (yet not quite inside) of the country Browns—as their governess. This sad difference of lot does not commonly take place in the professional class while the bread-winner is yet alive; he may fail in brain or health a little without losing his means of livelihood altogether—indeed, in the case of Brown the vicar they remain to him, even if he be bed-ridden, and in other cases the invalid's friends and associates rally round him, and something is done for the afflicted man; but in the lower middle class—that of the mechanic who works for weekly wage—a serious illness is almost as bad as a death-blow. There is but one step from competence to penury. It is small comfort, even to a selfish man, thus situated, to reflect that this misfortune is liable to occur not to him alone, but to nineteen-twentieths of those in his own calling. The little 'independence' is almost unknown among them, while the advantages of the 'benefit club' belong to a class below.

From the moment, therefore, that Herbert Thorne was stricken down by sudden sickness, the fortunes of the little household began to collapse rather than to wane. His weekly income had been better than that of many an unbeneficed clergyman, though it was largely taxed to defray the expenses of scientific experiments; and now it was absolutely *nil*. There was no in-coming at all, but all was outgoing—save what Maggie, who had the duty of sick-nurse to perform, could earn with her hands. It is the consideration of cases of this kind—which are as common as the toothache—which makes one smile contemptuously when the man of 'independent' means talks about 'hard times,' for he can never know what they are.

Maggie was very clever and assiduous; did not waste her wits or wages, like her father, upon impracticable theories; would have been the best helpmate and home-ruler that a diligent man could have taken to his bosom; and could have maintained herself at all times were health but granted to her; but the burden that was now cast upon her willing shoulders was greater than they could bear. The rent of the house, for one thing, would have swallowed up half her gains; and there were her father and the servant to feed, and the doctor to pay, and— But the list of what has to be provided for even in the most humble household is a long one, and would weary the comfortable reader; albeit every item of it as it flashed on poor Maggie's mind, was not merely a wearisome detail, but inflicted a pang as real and painful as the most sentimental woe ever endured by a heroine of romance.

She had found her father prostrate and powerless on his bed, unable even to shape her name, though he looked at her with an eloquence of love and sorrow that went beyond all power of words. And at the end of the terrible three months that followed, so far from being 'himself again,' of which Dr Naylor had given her hopes, he had not yet wholly recovered the use of his limbs—the power of getting about and helping himself—while, whether that once deft and diligent right hand should ever regain its cunning at all, was more than doubtful. Most fortunately, what work Maggie could do could be done at home, and she

had toiled by the sick man's bed all day without leaving him for an hour. He was not on any account to be 'worried' or made 'to think,' the doctor had said; so her talk had been always cheerful; she had sung to him his favourite songs—which her mother had taught her when a child—as soon as he was strong enough to hear them without tears; she had read to him also, whenever he had felt inclined, making up for the hours thus idly spent by work in her own room at night; and John Milbank had called every day, and sat with the old man, especially through that time when Maggie was compelled to go out to dispose of the proceeds of her handiwork, or for health's sake for a breath of fresh air. It was a hard life for her, yet in some respects, like all lives spent in the path of duty, it had not been without benefit to herself. She had learned from it that her affection for Richard had not only been misplaced, but selfish; and though it still existed within her, it was to be from henceforth subordinate to filial duty. Suppose she had married, and been forbidden by her husband to tend this beloved parent—would all Richard's protestations of devotion to herself, even had they been genuine, have consoled her, or acquitted her conscience for that undutiful desertion? The doctor's questions as to the cause of her father's seizure had quivered like a barbed arrow in her very heart. Did he suffer from any mental trouble? Was he grieving for a disappointment, or had he been for any length of time in expectation of some calamity? She answered in the negative, but something within her seemed to protest against her words. Without acknowledging to herself that she had been the cause of his misfortune, her whole soul was bent upon reparation; and in the practice of self-sacrifice, she had found a balm for many things. Only at first, the shadow of the coming Want, of the inevitable hour in which her slender purse should not contain a coin, threw gloom upon her soul. What gloom, then, must it needs be throwing upon him who, lying upon his sick-bed with helpless hands, had little else to occupy his thoughts! Yet, since he never spoke of it, and always had a smile for her, she had begun to hope that Fate, while striking him with so pitiless a hand, had deadened her father's capabilities of pain in this respect, and that, like a child, he took all that was given to him, without concern as to the source from which it came; that Nature herself had backed the doctor's orders, that the invalid was not to be 'made to think.' It was not long, however, before she was undeceived. On the very first day that the engraver was moved down-stairs into the sitting-room, he looked about him with a surprised and troubled air.

'Maggie, darling,' he whispered feebly, 'how is it that all is here as when I left it?'

'Why not, dear father? What should not be here?'

He pointed to the costly scientific instruments which he loved as Norman William loved the tall deer. 'These would have brought money, darling, and you must have needed it sadly. How is it you have managed without it?'

Maggie's cheek shewed a faint blush in spite of herself. 'I borrowed a little,' answered she; 'we are to repay the loan as soon as you are able to work again.'

The engraver looked at his wasted right hand,

still disobedient to his will. 'That is but poor security,' sighed he: 'there is but one man that I know of who would have advanced us anything upon it.'

'Well, father, he has done it, so what matters? Dr Naylor says you are not to worry yourself about business affairs.'

'It does not worry me to talk of John Milbank; it does me good.'

Maggie blushed deeper than ever; his words had a meaning for her which she strove to ignore.

'Tell me all about it, darling, from the first.'

'When you were first taken ill, father, I could think of nothing else but that, and the question of how we should pay our bill did not trouble me; besides, the doctor told me that you would soon be well again. But presently one little bill dropped in, and then another; and we began to owe for things that we had been used to settle for every week. Lucy's wages fell due too, and it seemed right to pay them before anything; and small as they were, they took my last shilling.'

'My poor Maggie!'

'Then the man called for the quarter's rent, and though he was civil enough, I knew it would not be so the next time; and others called who were not so civil. I had no idea how hard some folks could be.'

'But others were kind, Maggie; tell me about that.'

'John was very kind, father. He pretended that the price of goods, such as I supply, was raised in the market, and offered to dispose of them at higher prices; but I saw through that—here her voice began to tremble a little—and declined the aid that was but alms, however delicately bestowed.'

'And about the loan, Maggie?' continued the old man (for he looked old indeed now) after a long silence, during which he regarded her, while she worked on as usual, with yearning eyes. 'How was it he came to lend this money?'

'I think he saw that I was greatly troubled, father; and once, when I went out to pay some one who had been very importunate, an instalment of his bill, I found the whole had been already settled by an unknown hand. When I taxed John with having paid it, he at first denied it, and then insisted that he was your debtor. You had lent his uncle money, he said, years ago, through which he had made his fortune, and since he was his heir, John owed it you.'

'But the money was paid, Maggie.'

'So I told him, father; but he answered that the obligation remained, and that, at all events, he must insist on your accepting from him a loan to the same amount as the debt originally incurred. I was very loath, but he urged what was but too true, that money must be had somehow; and if I parted with your books or instruments, they would be sold at a great sacrifice, and that, besides, you would be crippled for the want of them, when you should recover. So at last I took the money.'

'Why, that was a hundred pounds, lass. I know not how it can ever be repaid,' added he, looking at her wistfully.

'You were not to worry yourself about that, he said,' answered Maggie hastily, 'but to repay it by instalments when it suited you; and besides, I have spent but very little of it; only, I thought it better to accept John's offer, handsome as it was, rather than be applying to him again and again, if

we should need to do so. It is so unpleasant to talk about money matters, even if one's friend is ever so kind—and indeed I think John was as embarrassed as myself.'

'Don't you think that, was because he was dealing with you, Maggie? When he comes to mention it to myself he will have no such shyness.'

'Very likely, father,' answered she quietly: 'a man understands a man so much better than he understands a woman.'

Then Maggie worked on in silence with nimble fingers, and the old man moved slowly about the room among his favourite instruments, touching this and that in an absent and preoccupied manner.

'John tells me that nothing has been heard of his brother, Maggie,' said he at last; 'you have heard nothing yourself, I conclude; no letter, nor anything?'

'I have heard nothing, nor do I expect to hear,' was her calm reply.

'And if you did?' asked the engraver with significance.

'If I did, it would make no difference, father; I would never marry Richard now.—Don't ask me why,' added she with vehemence; 'don't speak to me upon the subject, if you would spare me pain; but if it is any comfort to you to know it; Richard'—Here something seemed to choke her speech, and she laid her hand upon her bosom, as if in pain.

'What! you love him no longer?' cried the engraver with eager joy.

'I did not say that,' exclaimed Maggie passionately; 'I wish to Heaven I could! But do not fear that I will ever be his wife.'

The old man tottered towards her, and stooping down, kissed her bowed forehead. 'The doctor need not come again to see me, darling; your words have done me more good than all his drugs.'

If it was so, the cure was obtained at the expense of the physician: as the mesmerist gives his own vital force to eke out that of his patient, so Maggie, it seemed, had parted with heart and hope to give them to her father, for the girl had fainted at her desk.

A HALLUCINATION.

Mr aunt and cousins were going to Brighton for several weeks, and had asked me down to see them. As I was not certain on which day they intended to leave London, I thought I should call at my uncle's house in Westend Square, and inquire. When I rang the bell, the door was opened by a tall woman respectably dressed in gray. She did not look at all like a servant, and seemed between forty and fifty. Her features were good, but masculine, and she was very pale, but her paleness was not unhealthy. To my inquiry if Mrs — was at home, she said: 'No; they have all gone;' and before I had time to ask when they left, the door was shut. I knew that my uncle did not intend leaving town till the dissolution of parliament, and that when his family were from home, he generally staid at the *Palace Hotel*; so I went in search of him. I found he was staying there, but was not in. I then went to his club, but was unable to find him. I wished to know when I was expected at Brighton;

but as I was aware that I should be welcome at any time, my chief reason in looking for him was to find out who the strange woman was that was taking care of his house, as I could not get her face out of my head. I did not see him, however, and the next day I left for Brighton. I took the earliest opportunity of asking my aunt in whose charge she had left her house.

'There is no one in the house,' she said; 'it is locked up.'

I then told her that I had gone to the house; and described the woman who had opened the door, adding, that she was one of the strangest-looking women I had ever seen. My aunt said that I must be mistaken, as it was quite impossible there could be any one there. My cousins agreed with her, and asked me among other things, whether I had dined before going to the square.

'I know what he has done,' cried Amy, a smart child of eight—'he has rung the wrong bell.' This theory appeared to receive general acceptance; but I was not to be done out of my belief in this manner, and stuck firmly to my original assertion. My favourite cousin, Annie, was the only one who took my part, and said, that for all they knew, some one might have got into the house.

'If any one had got into the house,' said my aunt, 'it is quite evident that they would not open the door to any person who came to it.'

'But,' pleaded Annie, 'if they were there for no harm!'

'Nonsense,' said one of her sisters; 'it's an *hallucination*.' At this, they all laughed, and I joined them, though I was in no laughing mood.

As Annie had taken my part, she did not desert me, but telegraphed to her papa to go to their house, and ring the bell, knock at the door three times, and say 'Open sesame.' When she told us her message, she added: 'If there is any one in the house, they are certain to come for that;' to which we all agreed. My uncle, who would do anything for his daughter, did as he was requested, and telegraphed back that all his efforts had made no impression on the door. I was then left alone. Annie sided with the rest in telling me I had made a mistake. I was unshaken, however, and the recollection of the strange appearance of the person who had opened the door made me feel very uncomfortable. I made some excuse to go up to town the next day, and determined to investigate the matter for myself. On arriving in London, I went at once to my uncle's house. I rang the bell, but no answer. I knocked, but all was still. I again rang furiously, and even kicked the door, but in vain. I began to think that I must, on the former occasion, have gone to the wrong door, and went out some distance from the house to look at it before leaving. The blinds were all down; but just as I was turning to go away, I saw a hand holding the bottom of one of them, and which was at once withdrawn. It was merely for an instant that I saw this, and I left, feeling rather sick.

I returned to Brighton the next day, and told what I had seen. I could not, however, affirm that

I had seen the hand with the same confidence as I had spoken about the woman. The action was so instantaneous, that I felt I might have been deceived; so that when my cousins began to cross-examine me on the subject, and shew its unlikelihood, I rather wavered. When I admitted that I had rung and knocked for about five minutes, without any one coming, they evidently thought that I was mistaken on both occasions, and had seen nothing. My aunt had not this time ventured to give any opinion. Much to my disgust, they then began to talk of people who had imagined they saw all sorts of strange things, till at last my aunt stopped them. She was looking very grave, and put numerous questions to me about my health. Was I quite certain I had not been reading too hard lately? My cousins understood her, and were silent. I saw Annie looking very pitifully at me. They evidently thought my mind was affected. This was more than I could bear, and I quite believed what they told me the next few days, that I was looking very unwell indeed. My uncle came down for a night. He took me aside, and began talking rather mysteriously. 'Young men,' he said, 'reading law in chambers ought to take great care of their health, and not overwork themselves.' I had not had a book in my hand for about a month, but I did not tell him so. He strongly advised me to take a tour on the continent. When I saw my aunt, she repeated what her husband had said. They had evidently had a conference about me. As I did feel a little unwell, and had no desire to stay among people who thought I was a little crazed, I replied, that I thought that a little travelling would do me good. I found some men whom I had known at college, who were going to Switzerland, and they asked me to join them. We spent three very pleasant weeks in rambling about, and then we went to Vienna. I saw many people I knew, and quite forgot why I had left England. The memory of that strange-looking woman never haunted me while I was away. I was away altogether about five weeks. The day after I returned to London, as I was going to Westend Square, to see if my uncle had returned before going to Scotland, the thought of what I had seen at his house darted into my mind. Just then I met a friend. 'Have you heard of the great robbery at your uncle's?' he said. I was unable to answer him. 'I have not heard particulars,' he continued, 'but it seems to have been a very wholesale one.' While they were at Brighton, the house had actually been gutted. Pictures, carpets, and even chairs had been taken away. In fact, almost every article that was portable had been carried off. There had been no plate left in the house, so that was the only thing of value that was saved. It could be seen that the burglars had actually lived in the house; they had made a raid on the wine-cellar, and had left the empty bottles in all corners of the house. They had left a well-written letter, thanking my uncle for the use of his house, and for what they had taken, and stating that on some future occasion they might pay him another visit. Not the slightest clue to the thieves was ever, so far as I am aware, discovered. The police did not allow the thing to get into the papers, as they thought it might hinder them in finding out the burglars. I expected some apologies for my statements having been doubted. Instead of that, however, I was

told it was very foolish of me not to have informed the police of what I had seen. The reader may judge for himself whether I was more to blame than those I did inform.

IN DANGER.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

'My word, you're in luck, Masterton. A pleasure-voyage, with the chance of a rattling percentage on the profits of the transaction at the end of it, would be a deal more in my line than measuring out wet sand with a ten-foot rod, or hearing the thump of that monotonous old monkey-engine here,' said Leary, very disconsolately, as he and his comrade O'Dwyer stood beside me on the quay, puffing at their freshly kindled cheroots, and watching the approach of the *Suwarrow*, her sharp prow flinging up a miniature fountain into the sunny air as she cut swiftly through the water. Such, however, was not to be the case, since I was to be accompanied by the German clerk in spectacles, and by four or five carpenters or shipwrights, of whom two were English, and whose duty it would be to direct the construction of the raft, when the timber should have been dragged down to the beach. I made some laughing response to the discontented young Irishman, and then proceeded to summon Ali Sahib, who was sitting cross-legged on his little square of blue carpet, under the shadow of the nearest shed, and telling his amber beads with as much of serene composure as if the vessel in which we were to embark was not close at hand. The *Suwarrow* came steaming on, making but a brief stoppage at our tiny wharf; and as soon as I and my scanty baggage, with the workmen and the interpreter, were on board, the order to cast off was given, and the splash of the paddles mingled with the cheer which some of our good-natured labourers set up, while Messrs M'Phinn, Leary, and O'Dwyer stood waving their hands in token of adieu.

I was in high spirits, for not merely did the venture promise well, but the post-courier had, two days since, brought me a long letter from Kate; and the dear girl's fond words, and the often renewed assurance that she 'remembered no night and day in her thoughts and in her prayers,' had evoked her fair image before my mental vision, as if to comfort me in my exile. I had hope, too, great hope, that our engagement might prove a less protracted one than it had at first seemed likely to be, for the same mail had brought me a few lines from my godfather, Mr Grubstock, in which that eminent capitalist congratulated me on the good account of my conduct sent in by my official superior at Astrakhan, and hinted that when people returned to London, and it was possible to form a quorum, the Board would probably confirm my temporary appointment as engineer-in-chief. Let me but be successful in the present undertaking, thought I, and there will be little fear as to the speedy fruition of my hopes. These thoughts passed through my head as the red rocks and green islets of the gulf faded in the distance, and as we glided swiftly on, in a south-easterly direction, over the shining waters.

Ali Sahib, sitting a little apart from where I stood, was, with his graceful turban of pure white, his dark robe, and crimson girdle, a picturesque figure enough. Had he been of European race, I

should have guessed his age to be forty, or thereabouts, but a native of India always looks old for his years, and there were no gray hairs mingling with his long wiry moustache, and no wrinkles to mar the smoothness of his high and narrow forehead. His swarthy face wore an aspect of unusual intelligence, and his bright head-like eyes sparkled and glowed by contrast with the bushy black eyebrows that lowered above them. I found him, as the voyage proceeded, the pattern of all possible attendants. The *Suwarrow*, like many Russian steamers, was ill provided with accommodation for passengers; the meals were a scramble, the service bad and careless, the berths none of the best; yet somehow Ali Sahib, in his unobtrusive way, took care that my hot coffee and my shaving-water should be ready to the moment; and in twenty petty matters intervened to lighten the ills inseparable from a sojourn in a slovenly vessel. His tact and temper seemed faultless, for when I was conversationally disposed, I found in him a capital talker, full of information regarding India and Persia, while he never intruded upon my meditations when I appeared to prefer to pace the deck alone. He was himself as abstemious as an anchorite, cheerfully dining on a few handfuls of rice and boiled pulse, washed down with pink sherbet, and I noticed that, contrary to the habits of most orientals, he never once indulged in the luxury of a pipe.

'Do you see that?' said Ali Sahib, one morning, as he pointed out what looked like a hovering cloud of fleecy vapour, just visible on the eastward horizon. 'That is the mountain top known as Ak-tope, or the White Hill, the only spot in the Khivan highlands where there is eternal snow. And the blue line yonder is the Persian coast, but so faintly visible that it needs an experienced eye to see where land meets water. Our captain has steered his course much to the east, meaning, probably, to touch at some port of Astrabad before standing in for Mazanderan; but so far, so good.'

My guide's conjecture proved correct, and after landing on the shore of Astrabad some bales of goods destined for that province, the *Suwarrow* rapidly coasted towards the more mountainous country of Mazanderan, and soon we could see the majestic summits of the craggy Elburz frowning high above the white beach, and the dwarf palm-trees and cane-brakes of the swampy shore. The wind was blowing freshly from the far-off steppes of Tartary and Siberia, and the dancing wavelets flashed like leaping silver in the sunbeams. Long filmy streaks of cloud stretched themselves across the hitherto unvarying azure of the sky; and to these harbingers of an approaching change of weather Ali Sahib called my attention.

'Tails and manes of Timour's wild mares!' he said, smiling; 'such, at least, is the name which the wandering Tartars give them, and they are reckoned as a certain sign that storms are about to succeed to the summer heats. Well, you English have a proverb that it is an ill wind that blows no good, and yonder poor folks are probably of the same opinion;' and as he spoke, he pointed out to me a row of fishing-craft that lay at anchor, with furled sails, under the protection of a jutting reef, but each little felucca having perched at her mast-head a scantily attired boy, whose bare limbs, as he clung to the slender spar, looked like those of a

bronze statue. 'Night and day,' explained the interpreter, in answer to my questions, 'they keep watch at this season of the year, but not for fish. This is the time when the naphtha, washed from its bed by rain and tempest, may be expected to float in glittering floods upon the surface of the Caspian. Let but a glimpse be caught of the dull glimmer, miles away, and every sail is set, and every oar out, to hurry on where jar, and gourd, and pitcher may be filled with the precious oil that Allah grants to the gleaner of the poor. So was it ever, ay, before the old days of Rustam and Afrasiab, before the days of Nushirwan the King. For times may change, and the stranger bear rule, but Persia is Persia still, and cannot alter.' And he turned his head away, muttering between his teeth some lines of a poetry that even to my unskilled ear sounded very differently from the flowery verse of Hafiz and Sadi, with which his memory was so amply stored.

We landed at Allceabad, a little harbour at the mouth of the Amol, and nestling, as it were, under the shadow of the mighty range of the Elburz. Here Herr Gross, the German clerk, remained in company with the shipwrights, while I lost no time, under the auspices of Ali Sahib, in hiring horses, and in setting off for the interior. It is unnecessary to say more of the commercial part of my undertaking, than that my anticipations were surpassed by the amount of available timber that clothed the steep sides of the hills, and choked the narrow glens; and by the low price at which these fine trees, the oak, the elm, the walnut, the wild pear, and the mountain-ash, could be bought. The truth was that, save for the purposes of the charcoal-burners, who, like Ali Baba in the story of the *Forty Thieves*, brought their fuel by ass-loads at a time into the hamlets, where it was used for cooking, wood was in small demand. There was no means of transport by which so ponderous a commodity could be conveyed to the untimbered districts in the middle of the kingdom; whereas the streams, such as the Amol, would, when a freshet should occur, provide a speedy and economical mode of transit for the felled timber to the coast, where rafts could be built, and towing-power provided. The wood was considered as the joint property of the village communities, and it was, thanks to the patient dexterity with which Ali Sahib bargained with the elders of each petty municipality, that I succeeded in procuring the trees at a fair market-rate, while there were plenty of sharp axes, with strong arms to wield them, to be had for the hiring. Very soon we had imposing piles of timber collected on the banks of the Amol, ready to be floated down as soon as the expected rains should set in, and the mountain torrents be sufficiently swollen to yield the volume of water necessary.

I was now tempted, by the flourishing reports which my zealous interpreter gave me of the natural resources of a district yet more remote among the spurs of the Elburz, and situated at perhaps forty miles' distance from the landing-place, to make further purchases of timber on behalf of the Company, and at the same time to inspect some minerals which, although now neglected, might prove very valuable, could we obtain the royal permission to work them. This journey took us into a wilder and more romantic portion of the country than that which we had

previously traversed, and here I was astonished at the difference of manners which prevailed between the mountain peasantry and those of the lowlands. The water-pipes, the invariable adjuncts of an ordinary Persian divan, grew scarcer as I proceeded, and the fragrant scent of the 'rose-leaf' tobacco more and more rare. In some of the hamlets which we entered the women's faces were unveiled, though they ran shrieking to assume their coarse yashmaks as soon as they espied a stranger. In some of the cottages, I was surprised to see a small lamp, of antique shape, kept incessantly burning in a sort of niche, such as that in which, in the south of Europe, tapers flicker before the image of some patron saint; and once when I carelessly extinguished a candle by blowing at the flame, my hosts for the time being, who were a widow and her children, set up a cry of horror, and were duly chidden for this act of insubordination by my guide, who, however, excused them gently enough to me, on the ground of their being poor and untaught people, among whom a leaven of ancient superstition yet lingered.

One thing was clear: Ali Sahib's popularity among this simple race seemed unbounded. The peasants were courteous to me, but there was something of veneration in the manner in which they accosted him which almost puzzled me. I remembered, however, that in the East, holiness and learning are synonyms, and that, no doubt, the moonshee's elaborate education appeared marvellous in the eyes of these primitive foresters. I admit that he did much to win the good-will of those around him, writing at their request, with magnificent flourishes of his reed pen as it traversed the thin rice-paper, their long-projected letters to sons who were grooms or tent-pitchers at Tcheran, adjusting disputes as to landmarks or inheritances, reconciling sullen husbands to sharp-tongued wives, and gaining the confidence, as it seemed, of all children. He could recite poetry, too, to an extent unparalleled among Europeans, and would repeat the tales of Mejnoun, or some wondrous stories of jinns, afreets, magicians, tyrants, princesses, and hidden treasures, with a hundred auditors hanging breathless on his lips as he proceeded in the narrative. As for the promised minerals, the specimens which were brought to me were rich enough to merit a careful scrutiny of the spot whence the hematite, the pyrites, and the copper had been of old extracted. I therefore started for the mountains, guided by an intelligent peasant, who bore in his hand a pole spiked with iron, 'good,' as he told me, 'to beat off the bears and wolves that prowled in winter about the sheepfolds,' and which aided him to bound across the many threads of water, often with deep channels and rocky banks, that intercepted our course. Ibrahim, the villager in question, was a fine strong young fellow, lately married, and one of the richest peasants in the hamlet, and there was nothing cringing or servile in his demeanour, which was frank and kind. I found myself able to converse with him with tolerable ease, since he was a proficient in Turkish, having been kidnapped by the Uzbeks and sold as a slave at Khiva, whence he had been ransomed by his family; and I was thus able to eke out my growing stock of Persian words with the more familiar language of our labourers at Kizil-Batch.

As we reached the rocky glen where the abandoned mines—worked, so my guide informed me,

in the days of Soliman-ben-Daoud, but guarded now by malignant spirits, who would never allow men to do more than pick up a few pebbles above-ground—I heard the far-away clash of cyubals, the notes of a barbaric trumpet, and the low, hoarse beating of drums, mingling with the clatter of steel. My companion started, and shook his clenched hand, in the attitude of one who utters a malediction, in the direction whence the sounds came.

‘What is wrong?’ I inquired, hesitatingly.

‘The soldiers—the Persian troops,’ answered Ibrahim, with a dark look. ‘This must be the camp of Mirza Hussein, the young brother of the prince-governor of the province. I heard that he and his were ranging the country, eating up the substance of honest folk than themselves, and swaggering and scoffing at our rustic ways and plain fashions. I like not to know that these greedy troopers are our neighbours. We shall need to keep a watchful eye on garden and henroost, and well if they get no pretext for harrying us out of house and home, as they did at Kara-Serai a month since.’

But my curiosity was strongly excited at hearing that a Persian military force was close at hand, and I had no fancy for withdrawing until I should have had a nearer view of the encampment, whither Ibrahim, after some grumbling, consented to accompany me. On the road, I asked him whether he really conceived that we incurred any peril by approaching the troops, or whether his dislike to them was entirely founded on his experience of the pilfering propensities inherent in the ill-paid soldiery of an oriental monarch. He made answer, with a smoothness that seemed constrained after his late outburst, that he could hardly tell; that a Feringhee like myself, with his papers in perfect order, would be respected by any government official, and that the only risk incurred by a peasant like himself was that of being impressed to do a certain amount of labour, gratis, at carpet-beating, drawing water, or the like. At the same time the presence of such a force imposed heavy burdens upon the country that had to support it; and the women must stay within doors, and the beehives be hidden, and the oil-jars buried, and the cattle kept from straying, so long as stragglers from the camp were on the look-out for opportunities of plunder. And now we came in sight of the camp itself, white tents and green ones, each surmounted by a ball of gilt pith; while in front of those gaudier pavilions which were the property of the chiefs, spears had been stuck into the turf, and grooms stood holding horses gorgeously caparisoned.

It was not a very large array, perhaps consisting of a thousand cavalry, and twice that number of foot; but there were also camels and cannon, and that accumulation of camp-followers which, from the time of Xerxes downwards, has hampered the efficiency, while adding to the picturesqueness of eastern armies. The wild strains of the oriental music floated on the breeze, and the flutter of flags and the blending of colours, lent a certain charm to the scene. Most of the horses were picketed, but three or four small troops of riders were careering about, sportively discharging their fire-locks, or darting their lances at an imaginary foe. As we drew nearer to the camp, one of these parties seemed to catch sight of us, and immediately rode

towards us. As the Persian cavalcade approached, I took particular notice of the leader, an officer of rank, to judge by the splendour of his equipments, mounted on a powerful chestnut steed of Turcoman race, that pranced and curveted as he came on. This chieftain was a large-built man, a head taller than any of his followers; his broad chest blazed like the noonday sun, covered as it was with cloth of gold and jewels; and a crimson shawl, fringed with gold, was fastened to the back of his high conical cap of black lamb’s-wool, and fell upon his brawny shoulders. The purple trappings of his horse were gorgeous with silver embroidery; and the broad bridle was hung all over with golden coins, and amulets of silver and coral, and cowries, and tufts of the fleecy hair of the Tibet yak, and jingled at every step. He had a jewelled scimitar slung round him by a scarlet cord, and in his right hand he carried a bundle of those stent javelins in casting which the Persians are traditionally expert. (Such was Yussef Khan, who, as Ibrahim said, was not to be trusted.)

As poor Ibrahim spoke, a blunt-headed djereed came whistling through the air, forcibly flung by the practised arm of El Zagal, and struck him in the face with such violence as to dash him, stunned and bleeding, to the ground, while the brutal aggressor and his obsequious train joined in a horse-laugh of unfeeling exultation at the success of the practical joke.

Yussef Khan was now so near that I could perfectly distinguish his swarthy features, animated by an expression of mingled vanity and ferocity. A broad, flat face it was, denoting his origin to be from a Turcoman source rather than from the pure old Persian stock; and he wore a forked beard, and wiry moustache of a reddish tint, while his large mouth was garnished with a set of strong white teeth that a cannibal might have envied. There were scars on his tanned cheek, and his whole aspect was that of a fighting bully, not of Pistol or Parolles, harmless impostors as they were, but of Bobadil or Drawansir rather, a warrior whose heart had been hardened by a life of easy triumphs and unpunished outrage. But I was not long permitted quietly to scrutinise the truculent countenance of El Zagal.

‘Hollo, there, you dog without a saint, are you a Feringhee, or only a trencher-scraping Armenian?’ roared out the khan, reining up his steed. This polite address was simple enough to be comprehensible even to so poor a Persian scholar as myself; and I replied, as patiently as I could, stating my nationality and my errand, and offering to submit my papers for the inspection of a competent authority.

‘What’s all that jargon about firmans and passports?’ growled El Zagal. ‘If I’d my own way’—and then came something which I could not understand, but which provoked the ready laughter of his followers—‘your passport would be made out for Jehanum, my fine fellow. Ingliz, are you? What can you do? Can you catch this?’ And he rose in his stirrups, and hurled another of his pointless javelins at me with a force that would at the least have inflicted a severe bruise; but with a cricketer’s instinct, I turned it aside by a quick motion of my arm, and it fell idly on the turf beyond. This time the laugh was rather against the bullying khan, for another party of cavaliers from the camp had now ridden up, and these

seemed to stand in less awe of him than did his immediate escort.

As for myself, however, I felt in anything but a merry mood; for I began to apprehend the consequences of having mortified the self-conceit of a vain and fierce man. The khan's face grew very dark, and his moustache bristled like the hair of an angry boar, as he glared on the Frank who had dared to baffle his unerring aim. Twice his muscular right hand clutched at the hilt of his scimitar; and had we been alone, I have no doubt that it would have gone hard with me, unarmed and on foot as I was. Fortunately, however, there arrived on the scene a very young and slightly made man, mounted on a noble Arab horse, and wearing a gold-laced uniform varying but little from the European pattern. This was Mirza Hussein, general of the military force near to whose encampment I had ventured, and brother to the prince-governor. His clear-cut features and straight profile, no less than his slender frame, contrasted strongly with those of the khan, and bespoke him as a genuine Iranee of the pure race. The sight of El Zagal, vapouring in his wrath, of poor Ibrahim, now sitting up and staring stupidly about him, while the blood trickled down his face; of the javelins that lay upon the ground, and of a strange European in apparent altercation with the khan, seemed to tell the whole tale to the quick-witted young Persian. He said something to El Zagal which caused the latter to fall back a pace or two; and then, to my delight, addressed me in French, which he spoke with tolerable fluency. I briefly told him my name and nation, as well as what had occurred, offering at the same time my passport and credentials for his inspection; but he courteously waved them back; and after exchanging a word or two with those around, he again addressed me, and this time with marked kindness.

'I am sorry, monsieur,' said Mirza Hussein gently, 'that you should have met with so rough a reception here. We are not much used to travellers; and our valiant friend, the khan there, is a little hot and overhasty; but luckily I arrived in time to redeem our Persian repute for hospitality. If you will grace me by accompanying me to my poor tent—give the Frank a horse, somebody!—I shall be glad of the opportunity of conversing with an Englishman, a pleasure I have not enjoyed since I left the capital for these uncivilised regions. —You, too, good fellow,' he added in Persian to Ibrahim, who had now regained his feet, 'may come with us; and I dare say we can find a plaster for that knock in the face. —You can ride?' he continued, as an attendant led up a snorting gray steed, with a blue demipique saddle; 'but of course you can, for you are English'—which last words were uttered as I put my foot into the shovel-shaped stirrup, and sprang on the back of the gray Turcoman. —'And now let us make our way comfortably to the camp.'

A very polite and elegant young fellow was this juvenile prince; and as I sat beside him, at his special invitation, on the soft crimson carpet, beneath the many-coloured canopy of his splendid pavilion, waited on by Nubian slaves in snowy tunics and turbans, who brought us coffee and pipes, as well as sweetmeats, fruit, and iced sherbets, on trays of embossed silver, I could scarcely realise to myself that I had been but a few

minutes before assailed, insulted, and in danger of my life. Yet there, at some little distance, among a crowd of officers, sat Yussef Khan, the Left-handed or Unlucky, furtively scowling at me as he inhaled the fragrance of the Shiraz tobacco through the long snaky tube of his richly adorned kalioon. The prince told me in French, but speaking in an undertone, that El Zagal was a truculent old savage, only tolerated on account of his exploits against the Afghans and the Turcomans, but that he was still in favour with the so-called Old Persian party, or opponents of reform, and had thus been appointed to command a part of the troops under Mirza Hussein's orders. 'As for myself,' added the young commander gaily, 'I need not tell you that I go heart and soul with the new opinions and the new ways. I have had the advantage of a Frankish education—two years in Paris; *mon cher* M. Masterton, conceive you that!—and I am lost here in these barbarous mountains, and surrounded by dull sticklers for a literal observance of the Koran precepts. I am ashamed to offer you these sorry sherbets—it should be foaming champagne were we but snugly in Teheran—but here, in public, we must be careful of appearances. I hope to see great changes yet; but we must be prudent, or we clash with prejudices deeply rooted in the popular mind.'

Thus this Gallicised specimen of Iranee aristocracy prattled on, saying ten words for every one of mine; and when at length he would allow me to leave him, he kissed the tips of his fingers and waved them towards me, saying gaily: 'Adieu, monsieur; and believe me, should we meet again, I shall retain a *bon souvenir* of this charming conversation. But of that there is, *hélas!* not much prospect, unless you are persuaded to visit the capital, whither I hope to be allowed to return so soon as our present mission—which is hardly to the taste of a gentleman and a soldier—is accomplished. And that—but I must not blab state secrets—*for de Hussein!*—will not, I trust, be long. Give me joy, M. Masterton, on my chance of soon emancipating myself from this tedious banishment!'

Exchanging salaams with the remainder of the company, I now left the prince's pavilion, and presently quitted the camp, accompanied by Ibrahim, who had by Mirza Hussein's orders been clad in a new robe of fine blue cloth, and who had also been indemnified for the rough treatment which he had received by the gift of 'a purse of silver,' or about five pounds sterling. This liberality had, however, had no effect in dispelling the sullen gloom which had succeeded to his habitual good-humour; and as we gained the crest of the hill, and took our last look back at the gay tents of the military, the peasant ground his teeth and clenched his fist with an expression of bitter but impotent rage. He said but little on our homeward road; and when, on entering the village, we found Ali Sahib, wondering at our long absence, waiting for us, and ready to inform me of the excellent bargain which he, as my representative, had made with the head-men of the rural community, I could see him start and look uneasy as he observed the dejection of my guide. He put no questions to Ibrahim, however; but telling me cheerfully that dinner was waiting, and that he had ventured in my name to invite the elders of the village to a little feast in honour of the negotiation, he led the way back to the house where I was lodged, and

where I found a long low table groaning under the weight of smoking hot pilaffs, kabobs, soups, and various unknown preparations of fish, flesh, and vegetables, among which I was amused at recognising a dear old friend of my schooldays—a dish of cucumbers, stuffed, with rice and minced mutton; while round the table, on cushions and dressed sheepskins, sat ten or twelve of the notables of the hamlet, all of whom rose up as I entered, and lifting their hands so as to shade their eyes, cried with one voice: 'Well seen, protector of the poor! Welcome to the Englishman, the founder of the feast!'

ODDS AND ENDS:

FROM DR ROBERT CHAMBERS'S SCRAP-BOOK.

BISHOP LOWE'S ANECDOTES.—*March 21, 1853.* I have to-day visited Bishop Lowe, now in his eighty-eighth year. He lives in the same plain apartments in the old priory of Pittenweem, where I first found him in 1826; rather like an old ascetic than a modern priest; dressing very poorly in old, worn, greased black clothes. Although much shrunk and fallen off, there is still much life in his handsome old face and keen gray eyes. When, in 1790, he came to live in this part of Fife, where he presides over a small congregation of Scottish Episcopalians, there was a thick neighbourhood of gentry, with all of whom he was a frequent guest, often living with them for weeks at a time. There was much homely hospitality, four being the dinner-hour, and if a friend called in the forenoon, he was sure to be pressed to stay to dinner, *sans cérémonie*. Now, there is a great change in this respect, nothing but set invitations for a comparatively late dinner. The neighbourhood, too, is much thinner of resident gentry.

As an intense Jacobite, the bishop had picked up a store of anecdotes concerning the House of Stuart and its adherents; some of his stories, though trifling enough, were amusing in their way, and in nearly all cases seasoned with a degree of humorous causticity. I, from time to time, took notes of the anecdotes he was in the habit of relating. [Already several have been given in these *Odds and Ends*. The following are a few others.]

A FISHERMAN'S REPARTÉE.—General Anstruther, who represented the East of Fife burghs at the time of the Porteous Mob, gained unpopularity by voting for the bill against the city of Edinburgh. Having to go south, he deemed it imprudent to cross the Firth by the usual ferry, and pass to Edinburgh direct; so he got a couple of stout fishermen and a boat at Elkie, and crossed to East Lothian. On the passage, he fell into conversation with the two men. 'Well, I suppose you fellows are all great smugglers?' 'Ou, ay,' said one of them dryly; 'but I dinna think we ever smuggled a general before!'

A VENERABLE SPINSTER.—The bishop tells an affecting story of an ancient Miss Pitcairn of Forthar, who was a member of his congregation at Pittenweem some sixty years ago, and who lived in greatly reduced circumstances, having literally but fifteen pounds a year to depend upon. He nevertheless occasionally dined with her—the fare a fish, and a bottle of small ale. At length, Lady Anne Erskine of Kelly, interested in her on

account of her name (for Lady Anne's mother was a Pitcairn, daughter of the celebrated wit of that name), wrote to Dr Pitcairn, who was then in high practice in London, giving him an account of this venerable member of his clan, and, in short, entreating some assistance for her. This respectable man at once yielded to the prayer by granting her an annuity of ten pounds, which, of course, was to her all the difference between penury and comfort. The bishop went to dine with her and break the joyful news. After dinner, he produced a bottle of wine, which he said he had brought, because he had a particular health to propose. He said: 'I have to propose to you, madam, that we drink a bumper of that generous liquor to a man who deserves to have his health drunk in the best we have. I mean Dr Pitcairn of London, who has settled upon you an annuity that will make you comfortable for life—namely, ten pounds!' The poor old lady was overpowered with joy, and could sleep none that night.

ROSS OF PITCALINE [the poor broken-down Jacobite laird, of whom some droll anecdotes have been related] lived in Edinburgh, and was often in great straits for a meal. Happening one night to pass the house of Sir Lawrence Dundas, in St Andrew Square [now the building occupied as the Royal Bank of Scotland], the poor laird bethought him of a method of obtaining a handsome refreshment at the expense of that gentleman. Sir Lawrence was the candidate for the representation of Edinburgh in parliament, and he had succeeded in obtaining the favour of a certain number of the town-councillors, in whom the election lay. There was one councillor, however, a deacon of one of the crafts, who was essential to his cause, and whom he had assailed with every imaginable temptation, but as yet in vain. Pitcaline, aware that Sir Lawrence was confined to his chamber with gout, knocked at the door, and said something which led the servant to suppose he was the difficult-to-be-secured deacon. When the candidate heard who it was, his delight was great, and he gave orders that his visitor should be treated with the best in the house, while the excuse of illness was made for his not appearing himself. Set down to a pleasant repast, Pitcaline commenced by a request for a bottle of champagne and another of Madeira, and so he spent a couple of hours or so very much to his satisfaction. Having finished, when he could eat and drink no more, being stuffed to the throat, he departed by leaving his compliments—the compliments of Ross of Pitcaline to Sir Lawrence. The wrath and disappointment of the candidate may be left to the imagination of the reader.

PETER LOGIE.—Among the insurgents who escaped from Culloden was a little club-footed man called Peter Logie. Balamoon used to tell that Peter, lame as he was, got home to Angus six-and-thirty hours before himself, who had no such impediment. Being afterwards seized and put under examination, he was asked: 'And what situation did you hold in the Pretender's service?' 'I was his Royal Highness's dancing-master,' was Peter's contemptuous reply. He survived to keep an inn on one of the principal north roads, and it is related that a certain Lady Grant, who visited the inn in passing, had a child some time afterwards who had a club-foot—a consequence, it was supposed, of her imagination being impressed by Peter's

defect. The husband, next time he came there, jocularly accused Peter of being the cause of his child having a club-foot. 'Weel,' said Peter, 'ye canna say I gave it its nose though;' the fact being that the child resembled its parent in having hardly any trace of that feature.

A RESOLUTE FATHER.—Some one, observing a man of ninety in the Highland army of 1715, asked him how he, so old and feeble, could think of joining an enterprise in which he could render no active service. 'Wee, sir,' said the old man, who was from the head of Aberdeenshire, 'I ha'e eyes [grandchildren] here, and I ha'e sons; and if they dinna dee their duty, can I no shoot them?'

DIFFICULTY ABOUT A TOAST.—At a meeting of the Fife magistrates some years after 1745, a Whig gentleman gave as a toast 'the Duke of Cumberland.' David Beatoun of Kileonquhar, a zealous Jacobite, immediately after proposed 'James Sibbald, the butcher of Colnesburgh,' to the great indignation of his Whig neighbour, who said he must decline to do so much honour to a common tradesman. 'Sir,' said Kileonquhar sternly, 'I've drunk your buteher, and you'll either drink mine, or be put over the window!'

INCIDENT IN THE '45.—Mrs Moir of Leekie, who was a daughter of Stewart of Ardsheil, commander of the Appin regiment, used to tell that she was born in a kiln. Her mother had been obliged to retire to such a humble place of refuge, by the cruelty of the king's soldiers, who plundered and burnt the house, though she was at the point of being taken with the pains of labour. Mrs Moir used further to declare that the officers who had destroyed the house, had asked for silver spoons for their dinner, promising upon their honour to return them, but that they neglected to perform their promise. The spoons were carried off. Bishop Lowe asserts that many of the officers commanding parties sent to destroy the houses of the rebels after Culloden, were so mean as to pilfer silver spoons and other valuable articles. [Keeping in remembrance the picture of military subaltern officers presented in the fictions of Fielding and Smollett, these remarks do not excite surprise.]

SIR MICHAEL M.—, being in early life a portionless younger son, became a joiner in London, and it was his fortune to act as undertaker for the poor rebel lords in 1746. His good figure, as he stood on the scaffold at Tower Hill, attracted the regards of a niece of Lord Bathurst, who married him, and brought him £300 a year. Sir Michael had been poorly educated, and sometimes amused his friends by his ignorance. A witty shoemaker of Kirkcaldy, being brought before him, and condemned to a fortnight's confinement in the Tol-booth, affected to challenge the terms of the act of parliament on which the judgment proceeded, and which had been cited by the clerk. He asked Sir Michael to translate the words into English. 'Give that fellow other two months for contempt of court,' cried the magistrate.

LORD PITSLIGO.—When Lord Pitsligo, who had been concerned in the rebellion of '45, was under hiding at Auchries House, about five miles from Fraserburgh, the commander of a regiment stationed there received intelligence of the fact from some evil-minded person, and found himself, much against his will, compelled to make a search. He

had the address, however, to let the afternoon be pretty far advanced before making his approach, judging that the unfortunate nobleman might have the better opportunity of making his escape. It was night before his party reached the house. After stationing a soldier at every door and window, as was usual in such cases, he and some of the officers entered, and walked up-stairs towards a room in which Lord Pitsligo was said to be. On their tapping at the door, Lady Pitsligo came, and, seeing the soldiers, fainted away. This was a fortunate event, for common politeness seemed to command their attention to the lady, and, by obeying its call, they easily gave the lord time to escape. His lordship, on first learning the cause of the disturbance, pushed up the window and looked out, with the intention of hazarding his life by a jump. To his great consternation, he saw a soldier below, but was presently restored by the generous fellow saying softly: 'Jump, my lord—I shall stoop and not see you.' The aged nobleman accordingly jumped on the man's head, and got clear off.

[Bishop Lowe, the venerable narrator of these anecdotes, died at the Priory, Pittenweem, aged eighty-nine, January 26, 1854.]

LIVINGSTONE.

It is finished! We shall gaze upon that dauntless form no more:
The dust that once was Livingstone alone shall reach our shore.
He has perished where no aid was—not a kindred spirit near;
Not a word of friendly counsel to salve his dying ear!
Perished, with his hopes unsated, and his work still incomplete,
Africa's burning sky above him, and her deserts 'neath his feet!
Who may say what tender longings filled his lonely heart at last?
Thoughts of home and well-loved faces, visions of the sacred Past!
Yet we may not mourn the end that fitly closed so grand a life,
Nor begrudge him rest so welcome, wearied with a glorious strife.
He has fallen as falls the soldier, scorning to the last to yield:
Sternly fighting, still unconquered, prone upon the battle-field.
Not for *him* the gradual failing that the feebleness knows;
Not for *him* the slow decadence which from meaner purpose flows!
His to labour ever onward in Humanity's just cause;
His to stride the lonely path where Duty led without a pause;
His amid the forest wilds to dare an ever-present death;
For the welfare of his fellows to expend his latest breath.
Never in the blaze of battle was a truer hero seen,
Mid the swoop of hostile squadrons and the sabre's blinding sheen.
Such a life and such a death shall wreath a glory round his name
That shall brighten unborn ages, and illumine the scroll of Fame!

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH. Also sold by all Booksellers.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 535.

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE.

On the north side of the High Street of Edinburgh, opposite the cross, there was, in the early years of the present century, a plain-looking shop without any exterior show. The door was up three or four steps from the pavement, and on each side was a window with small panes. The interior was rather gloomy, for the roof was low; and in the rear, seen as in a kind of vista, there was a long warehouse, with tables, which, on certain days every quarter, were laden with the blue and yellow covered periodical, the well-known *Edinburgh Review*. There was a decorous though bustling air about the shop-lads; decent middle-aged clerks sat poring over ledgers at desks near the windows; mingling with the ordinary concourse of customers, might occasionally be seen learned and lawyer-looking personages in black coats, dropping in from the street, and making their way to an inner room, where sat the presiding genius—Archibald Constable, a round-faced portly man of gentlemanly aspect, who had, some years previously, gained distinction as the leading publisher in Scotland. Such is exactly what I remember, when, at my start in life as an apprentice, I was sent on business errands to Constable's in 1814.

Like other boys brought up for 'the trade,' I always felt a certain degree of awe in visiting this august temple of literature. It was imposing in its dinginess and wholesale arrangements, and to a youth it became peculiarly impressive on the issue of *Waverley*, in three volumes, when time after time I was despatched to procure fresh quantities to meet an insatiable public demand. As a humble behind-backs member of the bibliopole profession, I could not but feel the importance of 'doing business' at this marvellousemporium. In the way of maternal admonition, I had again and again been reminded that I could do no better than follow the example of Archibald Constable, who, at one time, had been as poor and friendless as I was—and now see what he has come to!

Only now, after a lapse of sixty years, has the

story of Constable's life and what he did for literature been fully told. The narrative is from the pen of one of his sons, Mr Thomas Constable, who does merited justice to his father's memory. To us, the work corroborates recollections of a long past period. All we can do here, however, is to offer a few of the more interesting circumstances, blended with such remarks as may incidentally occur. It is now exactly a hundred years since Archibald Constable was born at Carnbee in Fife, where his progenitors for a time had been decent and intelligent farmers. He might probably have continued the family in the same profession, but for the fact of a person from Edinburgh having set up as a bookbinder in the small town of Pittenweem. The sight of the bookbinder's shop and its modest exhibition of literary wares, suggested to young Constable the idea of being a bookseller. To enter himself to this profession in the little sea-side town was out of the question. The father, desirous of promoting his son's wishes, wrote to his correspondent in Edinburgh, Mrs Eagle, a respectable widow lady, who carried on the business of a seed-merchant. Through her friendly interference, the youth was engaged as an apprentice to Peter Hill, who was about to begin as a bookseller in the Parliament Close.

There is a traditionary episode not to be omitted. Mrs Eagle could not conveniently conduct the lad on his arrival to Mr Hill, but put him in charge of her youngest apprentice, Alexander Henderson, son of the gurdenor at Cringletie, in Peeblesshire, who had been only about a month in town. The circumstance led to a life-long intimacy between the two young men, both of whom made some figure in the world. Henderson diligently fought his way on, married the daughter of Mrs Eagle, became a noted seed-merchant, and was elected Lord Provost of Edinburgh. As for Constable, he commenced his career, February 1788. He says in an autobiographic sketch: 'Mr Hill commanded an excellent business. I lived in the house with him, and he was a kind and indulgent master. I passed six years very happily as an apprentice, and another as a clerk, receiving in

the last year thirty pounds of salary. Mr Hill's shop was frequented by the most respectable persons in Edinburgh. Burns the poet when in town was a frequent visitor; the distinguished professors and clergy, and the most remarkable strangers. I remember Captain Grose making frequent visits, and my conducting him to the Advocates' Library. Mr Hill did not remain long in the Parliament Close, but removed about the year 1790 to the shop at the cross, south side of the High Street.

Throughout his apprenticeship, young Constable devoted his entire attention to learning his business; attended book auctions, read catalogues, and embraced every opportunity of making himself acquainted with books. This knowledge was considerably augmented by having to make a catalogue of old and valuable books which the Earl of Moray had given to Hill in exchange for modern publications. Other work of the same kind followed, and ultimately he became so proficient in the character and value of old books as to give him a bias towards this branch of the trade. When his apprenticeship came to a close in 1794, he remained, as he tells us, another year with Mr Hill in the capacity of clerk. During this additional year, he became acquainted with a young lady, Mary Willison, daughter of David Willison, a noted printer, whose office, down one of the dingy old closes, he had frequently visited. It was scarcely prudent for the young bookseller to fall desperately in love, while still unsettled in life; Constable, however, attributed much of his success to his attachment to Mary Willison. Her father having taken a liking for Constable, did not object to the marriage, which took place in January 1795. The alliance was fortunate, for, as a printer, Willison could be of service to one destined to pursue the profession of a publisher.

Constable began business on his own account in 1795. Previous to settling down, he visited London, and, by introductions, made the acquaintance of Cadell, Longman, the Robinsons, and other eminent publishers. He also picked up a good many old books in London to furnish his shop in Edinburgh; his stock being increased by lots purchased from gentlemen in Fife and Perth shires. Thus provided, he set up in those premises at the cross already referred to. Having pitched himself in the midst of booksellers, he distinguished his place of business, by inscribing over the door, 'Scarce old Books,' which was quizzed by some of his brethren and neighbours as 'Scarce o' Books'—a joke which he did not mind. His success in business far exceeded his expectations; his shop becoming a place of daily resort for book-collectors and others. At this time and for twenty years later, booksellers' shops about the cross were places of daily lounge for all who aspired to literary tastes, and had some leisure to spare on gossip about things in general. These shops answered the purpose of clubs. A lounge with little to do, would probably spend an hour or so with Creech, who, on

fine days, held a kind of conclave on the steps to his door, his bald head covered with a nicely powdered wig; next, he would drop in at Hill's, or Constable's, or Bell and Bradfute's, or at the shop of Manners and Miller—a resort more remarkable, however, for wits, female literati, and we might add, people of a musical turn; for 'Bobby Miller,' one of the partners (a bland bulky man, dressed in nankeen breeches and white stockings, as if ever ready to go out to dinner, or to take a hand at whist), sang beautifully, and had a strong clientèle of musical admirers. A pleasant way of spending existence was that lounging about book-shops, to which the keepers of these establishments had no objection; for in these days things were taken very easily. The fact is stated in the Life of Constable, which we were already quite aware of, that in their mutual dealings the Edinburgh booksellers seldom settled accounts with actual coin. Bills played a considerable part in their dealings. A good deal was also done in the way of barter. At periodical settlements, balances such as seven pounds fifteen shillings and sixpence would be paid off by copies of Cook's *Voyages*, Doddridge's *Rise and Progress*, or some other work of which the debtor happened to have a redundancy—the transaction being always comfortably adjusted at Johnnie Dowie's, John's Coffee-house, or some such-like cosy tavern in the Old Town.

The hangers-on at Constable's were usually of an enlightened superior order, such as wealthy country lairds on the scent for curious old books, town clergymen, professors in the university, lawyers in high practice, antiquaries, and artists. From this circumstance, as well as from his enlarged views and liberal dealing, Constable became the publisher of the *Farmer's Magazine*, the *Scots Magazine*, and certain *Medical and Philosophical Journals*. With these beginnings, he was appropriately selected by Jeffrey, Sydney Smith, John Archibald Murray, Francis Horner, and others of the set, to be the publisher of the *Edinburgh Review*, the first number of which appeared on the 10th of October 1802. Willison was, of course, the printer; and at his office in Craig's Close, it was customary, for sake of *incognito*, to meet to consider articles and settle on the conducting of the work. The success of the *Review*, which was immediate and complete, may be said to have been chiefly due to two things—the ability of the writers, and the liberal payment per sheet by the publisher. For a time, the *Edinburgh* carried all before it; in fact, had the field to itself, until the appearance of the *Quarterly* in 1809.

Getting deeply into the publishing line, Constable gradually dropped the old book-trade. Seemingly with a view to bringing capital into the concern, he took a Mr Hunter into partnership, which subsisted for seven years. Hunter was not bred a bookseller. He was a man of literary tastes, and being son of Hunter of Blackness, he possessed a high social standing. Perhaps so much the

worse. Like many others at the time, he was a good deal of a bon-vivant, a quality which by no means leads to success in business. On an occasion of Longman making an excursion with him in Forfarshire in 1803, he astonished and half-killed the London publisher with drinking-bouts at gentlemen's houses. In a letter to Constable, Hunter moralises on the incapacity of his companion to stand this style of living. 'These Englishers will never do in our country: they eat a great deal too much, and drink too little; the consequence is, their stomachs give way, and they are knocked up, of course.' Three years later, he took Murray of London on a similar expedition, and in the same way nearly finished him. The carouse was at Brechin Castle, and is described as being 'dreadful.' He pities Murray, but says, 'he has himself principally to blame, having been so rash as to throw out a challenge to the Scots.'

What a record of past manners! Constable did not relish intelligence of this kind, and we can see that Hunter, with some fair abilities, was a drag on the concern. An attempt was made in 1809 to set up a branch of the business in London; but the representative in charge, named Park, died, and the attempt being abandoned, the firm fell back on commission agencies. Hunter died suddenly in 1811. According to the narrative before us, he appears to have made a safe investment as a partner. 'He advanced originally in 1804, £2500; in 1811 he had drawn that sum and about £4000 besides—consequently, with the £17,000 paid to him [share of capital stock at his decease, possibly], he gained fully £21,000 by being A. C.'s partner.' In other words, for the miserable input of £2500, Constable gave away £21,000, for which, as far as we can see, he received no substantial benefit. His next partner was a Mr Cathcart, who took Hunter's share in the concern, introducing at the same time Mr Robert Cadell, as a member of the new contract. At this time, according to an abstract of accounts, the assets of the firm amounted to £104,000, from which had to be deducted debts amounting to £54,000, leaving a clear balance of about £50,000—a good sum to have been realised in sixteen years, after paying all expenses, and living in a comfortable style. There was, however, an awkward item in the state of affairs: In the debts due by the firm was comprehended the sum of £33,000 of bills, by which it is seen that, even at this time, the business was largely carried on by a system of credit.

Perhaps Constable could not have reached the climax he did by the slower and more safe system of ready-money dealings. He had already formed an intimacy, if not business connection, with the notabilities of literature, and constituted the Scottish capital an eminent publishing centre. The best literary property going fell in his way. Until his time, the publishing business in Edinburgh had for the most part been conducted in a narrow scraping manner. The most enterprising in the trade was Charles Elliot (father-in-law of the late John Murray of Albemarle Street), who removed with his business to London. Creech, on the contrary, was to the last degree mean in his dealings, of which a painful instance occurred in his settlement with Burns for the first complete edition of his works.

Archibald Constable appeared on the scene as a revolutionist in the profession. For a time he

'had the ball at his foot,' was the head publisher in Scotland, and courted by London publishers for a share in the 'good things' he had secured. The happiest period of his life was perhaps about 1810, when things were in a flourishing state without any serious alloy, at which time he lived in a pleasant suburban retreat at Craigerook, along with his rising family; showing hospitality to distinguished men of letters who travelled so far northward. What happiness is sometimes diffused in a dwelling by the presence of a kindly-natured maiden aunt! It was the fate of the family at Craigerook to be so cheered, by Miss Jean Willison, sister of Mrs Constable, and who was familiarly known as 'Auntie Jean.' In her youth, she had been sent to France for her education, and there she became the admired of a young French gentleman, who, in token of his affection, presented her with a box of bonbons. Jean was too good a daughter to marry without her father's approval, and the Frenchman was left to sigh in vain. An end was abruptly put to the affair, by the outbreak of the war with England. Jean fled, and got home in safety. What became of the forlorn wooer we are not told. Jean's feelings, however, had been touched. She treasured the box of bonbons, at the bottom of which she found a ring. This sad memorial of hopes now for ever vanished, she put on her finger, and listening to no other lover, devoted herself to the duty of a ministering angel in the family of her sister. Latterly, in her old days, Auntie Jean became a little eccentric, and somewhat deaf. When dying, she said confidently: 'If I should be spared to be taken away, I hope my nephew will get the doctor to open my head, and see if anything can be done for my hearing!' In this wavering state of mind, the gentle being passed away to her rest. Auntie Jean's ring, as it ought to be, is still preserved as a family relic.

The abstraction of capital by the death of Hunter was a misfortune to the firm, compensated by a reinvigoration from Cathcart; but this new partner did not long survive. He died in 1812. The heavy draught made on the concern by this event, occurred about the time that the *Encyclopædia Britannica* was purchased, when heavy charges were undertaken in connection with that voluminous work. From this period, we trace a downhill financial course. Bills were not only given in discharge of regular business obligations, but put copiously in circulation to raise capital from bankers and money-brokers. In short, a system of accommodation bills became a chronic disease in the concern. Never was there a more conspicuous instance of an estimable tradesman being led on to ruin for want of a primary resolution not to launch beyond his depth. This he lived to see and mourn over, but without the means of retrieval. Looking to Constable's breadth of views, his liberal treatment of authors, and the general success of his undertakings, as well as to his upright character, and kindness of disposition, one feels regret that he should have suffered from entanglements leading to financial disaster. In his career he may be said to have exemplified the truth that friends are sometimes to be more dreaded than enemies. Some of his books were printed by James Ballantyne, who, at the beginning of the century, had been attracted from Kelso to Edinburgh, and shewed a taste in execution which now raises some surprise, considering the imperfect mechanism on which the printing-trade

had still to rely. Scott, who had known Ballantyne at school, took an interest in his progress, and, as is well known, actually, though not ostensibly, became a partner in the firm of James Ballantyne and Company, printers. There thus arose a queer, scarcely definable, connection between Walter Scott, James Ballantyne and his brother John, and Archibald Constable and Company. A whole volume would be required to describe how the Ballantynes drew on Constable and Company; how they in return drew on the Ballantynes; and how Scott drew on both to raise money to pay for Abbotsford. The complication was tremendous. Then, there arose a fresh and worse complication in the bill-transactions between Constable and Company, and Hurst, Robinson, and Company, publishers in London, through whose shortcomings ultimately came the general *coup-de-grâce*.

Constable had published some of Walter Scott's earlier productions, and nothing was more natural than that he should have been asked to issue *Waverley*. On seeing a portion of the work, he offered seven hundred pounds for the copyright, which was not accepted, and this, the first of the famous novels, was published on a division of profits. Of a number which followed in rapid succession, Constable and Company became the proprietors, and considering the prodigious sale of these matchless fictions, one would think that here alone was a bounteous fortune. So there would have been, but for those wretched financial complications already adverted to, and more particularly for the heavy demands for prepayment by Scott, whose necessities were so great on the score of his Abbotsford purchase, that he habitually used up the money for copyrights before the works were written. Constable might doubtless have refused to enter into these wild transactions, but at the loss of an author the most prolific and most prized of his age. As an example of the kind of dealings pursued, take the following, which occurs in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*: 'Before the *Fortunes of Nigel* issued from the press, Scott had exchanged instruments, and received his bookseller's bills for no less than four "works of fiction"—not one of them otherwise described in the deed of agreement—to be produced in unbroken succession, each of them to fill at least three volumes, but with proper saving clauses as to increase of copy-money in case any of them should run to four.'

Lockhart, in making this candid statement, has written in an unworthy spirit of Constable in relation to Scott's affairs, in some instances disingenuously suppressing the truth, while evidently Sir Walter Scott was himself far from blameless. Nor must it be forgotten that Constable did good service in causing books to be written which would probably never otherwise have existed. In a letter to him, March 23, 1822, Sir Walter says: 'They talk of a farmer making two blades of grass grow where one grew before, but you, my good friend, have made a dozen volumes where probably but one would have existed; for the love of fame is soon satiated: and besides, a man who is fond of it turns timid and afraid of indulging it; but I should like to see who is insensible to the solid comfort of eight thousand pounds a year, especially if he buys land, builds, and improves.' To the enterprise of Archibald Constable, we are therefore unquestionably indebted for the existence of a

number of the Waverley novels. So far at least, he was a national benefactor.

The three volumes composing the Memoir of Constable by his son, abound in correspondence with authors of celebrity at the beginning of the present century and others, that cannot fail to be read by all interested in the history of English literature. Among the immenso heaps of letters is seen one by Robert Chambers to Mr Constable, in 1822, fervently thanking him for having introduced him to Sir Walter Scott. At this time Robert was only twenty years of age, and in the midst of his early struggles. The intimacy he formed with Constable led to other letters, one of them having reference to the *Traditions of Edinburgh*, of which a somewhat too large second edition had been printed. On this subject, at the request of my brother, I called on Mr Constable, in 1825, at his premises, No. 1 Princes Street, to which his business had not long previously been removed. As in the case of every one else, I was courteously received. The interview between the smallest and the greatest of publishers was as interesting as it was memorable to one of the parties. I was advised to send a superfluous portion of the edition to Hurst, Robinson, and Company, who, at his recommendation, would do the best they could for the work. Adopting the friendly advice, I had afterwards reason to fear the propriety of the step; went to London, and settled the matter—this my first visit to the metropolis happening to bring about an intimacy which gave a colour to my future existence.

At the time I thus intruded on the great Scottish publisher, a dismal fate was impending over his affairs. To the eye of the world, he was still supreme, an object of envy. In a few months later, as shewn by the work of his son, the difficulties of the firm were appalling. Robert Cadell, whose clear views and business tact were invaluable, disclosed this painful state of matters, in a letter to Constable, then in London, 10th January 1826. He says: 'We must have fifty thousand pounds, less will do no good whatever; indeed, forty thousand pounds would be required soon; but without the first, we could not manage to get over our present difficulties, and even then with a great strain.' The attempt to raise such a sum was hopeless. The results of the mad speculations of 1825 had burst like a storm on the financial world. Bankers would barely look at bills. The end had come. Archibald Constable and Company, and the firms connected with them, came down with a crash, sending a shiver through the realms of paper and print. Sir Walter Scott came in for his share of the general ruin. How he supported the loss, and how he honourably devoted himself to the task of paying off his obligations, is it not known to history?

This was a terrible downcome to poor Constable, now advanced in life, and stripped of everything by creditors. His eldest son, David, to whose interesting story a chapter of his brother's work is devoted, was bred as a bookseller, in the hope of furthering the business; but he subsequently went to the Bar, and could give no help. He had inherited the printing business of his grandfather, David Willison, and was unhappily involved in the family misfortune. The sad reverses preyed on his mind, and he died in partial seclusion many years afterwards (1866).

Archibald Constable had some comfort in his family. His first wife died in 1814, but in 1818 he effected a second marriage, and there was a family of sons and daughters, anxious to soothe his declining years. All his old friends rallied about him. A career of literary adventure had still some charms. *Constable's Miscellany*, a collection of cheap popular works, which he had two or three years ago projected, was set on foot, and met with an encouraging approval. It was a noble but dying effort. A life of unwearying exertion, along with bad health, had worn out his frame. The closing scene is pathetically described by his son. He tranquilly died, 21st July 1827.

Archibald Constable aimed at and unquestionably deserved a better fate. The literary property belonging to his firm at the final catastrophe was more than sufficient in value to have covered all the debts with which it could be chargeable. What was needed was a temporary readjustment. But the times were out of joint, and everything was sacrificed. The harvest sown by Constable was reaped, and is still being reaped, by others to whom his property drifted. The *Edinburgh Review* became the entire property of Longman and Company; the *Encyclopædia Britannica* was purchased by Adam and Charles Black; and to this last-named and respectable firm, at the price of twenty-five thousand pounds, fell the *Waverley Novels*, after a splendid fortune of more than a hundred thousand pounds had been skilfully wrung from them by Robert Cadell—and which novels, even now, after sixty years have elapsed since the first was issued, are as popular as ever. The moral to be drawn from a biography so instructive and so mournful as that of Archibald Constable, is too obvious to need any special reference. W. C.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER XV.—CHAMPIONED.

A FEW days after that avowal from his daughter's lips, which had made the engraver very literally 'another man'—brought the light back to his eye, the flush of health to his wasted cheek, and even returning steadiness to his still wayward right hand—Mr Linch, the lawyer, paid them a visit. Without having absolutely neglected them during their late troubles, he had not been a frequent visitor in Mitchell Street, and his arrival on that particular morning astonished them considerably, for it happened to be the Sabbath, of which that gentleman was a very strict observer.

'I am glad to see you up and about again, Mr Thorne.—Miss Maggie, I hope you are well?'

The difference of manner with which the newcomer delivered those two sentences was remarkable: the former was spoken in as genial a tone as the sacredness of the day permitted, the latter was cold and formal. The sensitive ear of the engraver at once detected this. He knew that the speaker thought ill of Maggie for her fidelity to Richard Milbank, and judged her with sectarian narrowness, and though he had at one time lamented her obstinacy to this very man, he resented—now that she was obstinate no longer—any show of reproof towards her.

'I believe Maggie is more of an invalid, Mr Linch, than myself,' observed he gravely: 'in tending me, she has, I fear, injured her own health, and has no more appetite than a bird.'

'There are some birds—such as cormorants,' remarked Maggie cheerfully, 'who have very good appetites, father.'

'Yes; but you don't eat like a cormorant, my darling, but more like a canary; and the consequence is, you are worn to a shadow.'

'Miss Maggie looks pale and delicate, doubtless,' said Mr Linch dryly. 'Could I have a few minutes in private with you, Thorne?'

'In private? Well, I have no secrets from Maggie; but—'

'It is no secret, unfortunately,' interrupted the lawyer; 'but I think it would be more advisable to say what I have to say to you in your daughter's absence.'

'Is there any news—I mean, from Rosebank?' exclaimed Maggie suddenly. 'If so, Mr Linch, I can bear to hear it; nay, I claim to hear it.'

Mr Linch returned her appealing look with one of extreme surprise. 'Claim to hear it, young woman!' returned he with irritation; 'the law knows no such claim: it is not as if you were an accused party.—Upon my life, Thorne, I don't know what your daughter means.'

'You must be very dull, then,' said the engraver tartly. 'She wishes to know if there is any news of Richard Milbank.'

'No, no,' answered the lawyer hastily; 'none at all, I assure you—none at all. It is on quite another matter that I wish to have a few words with your father.'

Maggie at once withdrew, and left the two men alone together.

'It is the most extraordinary thing that your daughter should have asked that question,' gasped the little lawyer: 'my head was so full of certain news from Rosebank, that I could think of nothing else. Richard Milbank had no place in my mind, because it was wholly occupied with John.'

'What about John?' asked the engraver with anxiety. 'I thought, when you rang the bell like that, it was sure to be he.'

'Well, John has got into a scrape. You would think he was the last man in the world to have done it, but he has come into—yes—collision with the police,' said Mr Linch, bringing out this painful intelligence with a gasp of desperation.

'With the police!' echoed the engraver, astounded. 'What! has John been drinking?'

'No, indeed; perhaps it would be better for him in this case if he had. He has committed a very serious assault without drunkenness to excuse it, upon Mr Dennis Blake.'

'Well, he was right so far—I mean, in his selection of a victim,' observed the engraver grimly. 'It was about Richard, of course; and, for my part, I have always held that that fellow Blake knows more about John's brother than he chooses to tell. He was very flush of money just at the time he disappeared—though he soon got quit of it at cards, they say—and if there was foul play anywhere—'

'It was not about Richard that the quarrel arose,' interrupted the lawyer gravely, 'or else I should not have come here to-day. It was about somebody dearer and nearer to you than he, Thorne: it was about your daughter Maggie.'

'I have heard something of this before,' said the engraver, with an air of extreme annoyance. 'I know John means us well, and more than well, every way; but he should not pay attention

to the idle talk of every good-for-nothing, nor think it necessary to correct him for letting his tongue run. It does more harm than good to those he would stand up for.

'Blake said a very aggravating thing this time, however,' replied the other, looking at the engraver very fixedly; 'and supposing it was all lies, as I hope it was, I don't blame John—speaking as a man, of course, not as a lawyer—for taking the matter up. But Blake was drunk, it seems; indeed, if he had not been, he would not have dared to say what he said; and John has beaten him within an inch of his life. I say again, it is a serious business. The case will have to come to-morrow before the magistrates; and if it should turn out that Blake was only telling the truth, or what he believed to be the truth'—

'The truth about *what*?' inquired the engraver impatiently. 'You don't mean to say, I hope, that it was anything disgraceful, which might yet be true of my Maggie?'

'Now, my dear Thorne, it is no use your putting yourself in a passion; I have come here to get at the facts of the case, whatever they may be, for I shall have to meet them to-morrow. Mind, I assert nothing of myself; but if what Blake said was true, Richard Milbank has left a legacy of shame and wrong behind him, such as my heart bleeds to think of, for *your* sake. There's a child in Poulter's Alley out at wet nurse'—

'Silence!' exclaimed the engraver, in sharp shrill tones, and rising from his chair as hastily as his lame limbs would let him. 'You do not know Herbert Thorne's daughter.—'Maggie!' cried he, going out upon the landing, and calling up the stairs, 'come down here, lass; thou'rt wanted. —'Not a word more, Mr. Linch, I beg, until she comes'.

'It is an unnecessary ordeal,' commenced the lawyer; but the next moment, the girl stood in the doorway, pale and undisturbed, with her quiet inquiry: 'What is it, father?'

'John Milbank has got into trouble through thrashing Dennis Blake, for uttering lies about you, Maggie. Mr. Linch has called to know whether they are lies, in order that he may adopt the proper line of defence. Please to answer any question he may put to you.'

'Your father has imposed a very unpleasant duty upon me,' observed the lawyer hesitatingly; 'it is none of my seeking, of course. I merely came here as John Milbank's legal adviser, in order to get at the facts.'

Maggie bowed like a princess, walked quickly up to her father, and kissing him, forced him gently into a chair; for, notwithstanding his attempts at self-control, he was trembling excessively; and then stood up with her hand on his shoulders, confronting the visitor.

'Well, sir?'

'You have—ahem!—a pensioner, I believe, in Poulter's Alley,' he began—'a young woman?'

'Not now,' replied she, with quiet sadness: 'the person you speak of is dead.'

'Indeed! I saw her myself, not an hour ago.'

'You are mistaken. However, there was a poor girl there, to whom I gave assistance—as much as I could, though much less than I would fain have given.'

'There is a child—an infant—out at nurse there: is it true that you support it?'

'I do so.'

Maggie felt her father shiver beneath her touch, and sliding down her hand till it met with his, clasped it assuringly.

'My daughter is always good to the poor,' said he, 'though we are poor ourselves.'

'And who is the father of this child?' inquired the lawyer, looking at his fingers, and dropping his voice to almost a whisper.

'Must I tell that?' asked Maggie, in the same hushed tone.

'It will have to be told to-morrow, and if I am unacquainted with the fact, my client will be placed at a disadvantage,' was the rejoinder.

There was a long pause; and Maggie's lips moved twice in vain before they could shape her answer: 'It is Richard Milbank.' Then she burst into tears.

'It is mere cruelty to your daughter, Thorne, to continue this investigation,' said the lawyer, himself greatly moved; 'we must make the best fight of it we can for John; that's all.'

'Maggie! darling, Maggie! he does not know you as I know you; he has not your hand in his as I have, bidding me trust on through all. You must bear one question more, and answer it.—You may ask it, Linch, without fear. Nay, if you will *not*, I will.—Richard Milbank is the father of this child, you say, Maggie; now, tell us one thing more: who was its mother?'

'It was Alice Grey of Dardham. She ought to have been Richard's wife. May Heaven forgive him for his wrong to her! She died some weeks ago—I fear, in want—I was too late to help her; only just in time to save the child.'

'And this can be corroborated by proof?' exclaimed the lawyer excitedly.

'If necessary—if absolutely necessary to John. But oh, spare Richard!'

'My dear Miss Maggie, we will admit nothing unless we are absolutely obliged. After what you have told me, I should think this Blake would be only too glad to compromise the affair. However, though he spoke in malice, it was probably in ignorance of the facts of the case, and he has certainly been most terribly knocked about. We shall have to pay the man a good lump sum, no doubt.—It is very hard upon our friend John,' continued Mr. Linch, addressing himself to the engraver, 'to suffer thus in pocket for his brother, having just paid off his debts. I settled the last one for him yesterday. I never knew a man with so fine a sense of duty. Well, I go away with a light heart, Thorne, upon all accounts.—Miss Margaret, I wish you good-day.' His friendly and effusive manner had quite returned. Maggie suffered him to take her hand, which most young women who had been subjected to such an injurious suspicion would probably not have done; but her nature was eminently a just one. She perceived that the circumstances of the case had afforded Mr. Linch no other alternative than to believe the child in Poulter's Alley was her own. Was it possible, thought she, with a shudder, that John Milbank also believed it, notwithstanding that he had resented the accusation in another's mouth? What a good brother, as Mr. Linch had said, had he proved himself, and how unostentatiously had he performed his good deeds, for not a word had he dropped to them about settling Richard's debts!

The consciousness of having grudged him praise,

and the sense of his late kindness to her father, in the matter of the loan—as well, perhaps, of this last action in her own behalf, though she tried to shut that out from her consideration—prompted her to speak of John as she had never done before. She said he seemed to her to be the most unselfish and unsullied of all men of their acquaintance.

The engraver smiled; her choice of adjectives was particularly agreeable to him, since it appeared to be suggested by the contrast in the characters of the two brothers; but, taught by experience, he refrained from eulogy. John was always a good fellow, he admitted; but why was he not more popular? There must be something wrong, he feared, about one who was a favourite with such few people.

Maggie quoted from the book that she had been reading to her father before the lawyer had looked in, the observation that the friendship of the world was not to a man's credit, but altogether the other way.

'In that case,' returned the engraver, 'John should be secure of heaven, since everything he does has a bad motive ascribed to it by his fellow-creatures. The very paying-off his brother's debts will be considered but a tardy act of justice—nay, of reparation, though, to my knowledge, the poor fellow has been sadly straitened for money to carry on his business.'

'Of reparation! How of reparation?' inquired Maggie.

'Oh! they say he made money by Richard, instead, as was really the case, of having been half-ruined by him! His very disappearance, even, has been laid to John's account.'

'What do you mean, father?'

'Nay, I don't mean to say they think he murdered him; but the world says—or did, before I was taken ill—that he bought him out of the concern at a cheap rate, and so secured it for himself.'

'Then the Hilton world must be a very, very wicked and slanderous one,' said Maggie indignantly.

The engraver shrugged his shoulders. 'I think it is the air, my dear. I have known somebody in Hilton—and not, in my judgment, a wicked person—who had at one time never a good word to say for this John Milbank, herself.'

To this, Maggie answered nothing; but after a while, during which she gazed fixedly at the book before her without reading a line, she observed: 'If you knew John was straitened for money, was it not wrong, father, to let him lend us so large a sum the other day?'

'I did not know it was lent, until afterwards,' returned the engraver, smiling. 'It was lent to you, you know, my dear, not to me.'

'That was only, of course, because you were ill, and could not attend to such matters. Don't you think it would be better to return him, say, half of it at once, and pay him the remainder by instalments, as we can scrape it together?'

'Why not give him security for the whole, Maggie?' answered the old man slyly. Then, perceiving that he was not understood, he added: 'Is it possible, my good lass, that you did not guess by what means we have won through this terrible trouble? You know, of course, that it was thanks to John; but are you so blind as not to see why John has helped us? It is my belief that he has loved you from a boy; only, because Richard was too quick for him with you, he never spoke of it.'

'Oh, father, father!' cried Maggie, hiding the crimson of her cheeks in both her hands, 'I hope not, I hope not!'

'That's hoping against hope, lass, for it is the case. But there is no need to take on so; I have quite done with giving you advice as to marriage, and if I know John, he is not one to intrude his attentions where they are not wanted. He is too used to holding his tongue, poor fellow, to plague you in that way. While Richard was paying you attentions, John could scarcely have done you a service lest it should be misunderstood; but now the coast is clear, he has ventured upon a kindness. But as to speaking to you of marrying him, unless you give him some encouragement, that he will never do: such, at least, is my view of the matter, and though my limbs are lamed, I have still some use of my eyes.'

The sorrowful glance that the engraver cast on his nerveless right hand went more perhaps to Maggie's heart than all his words. 'I am very sorry, father, for your sake,' sighed she, 'that I cannot love John Milbank. I honour and respect him above all men, and feel more grateful to him than I can express, both on your account and my own.'

'May I tell him that, Maggie?'

'Yes, father: it is but right that he should know it.'

'My darling, you are curing me fast; where honour and respect are won, love is not altogether out of reach.'

'My love is dead, father,' sighed she, 'and no miracle can ever quicken it.'

'But if John would be content with the respect and honour, lass, and take you on those terms?'

'It is not necessary to speak of that, father; when John asks me to become his wife—if he be really so ill-judged as to desire it—it will be time enough to consider that matter.'

'Very good, Maggie; we will say no more about it,' said her father softly. He was secretly well pleased with the measure of success that had been vouchsafed to him.

DR. BEGG ON NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA.

THE Rev. Dr. Begg, having lately visited New Zealand and Australia, has given some account of his excursion in a popular address in one of the large halls in Edinburgh. As an acute observer, the information he offered was practically valuable. We select a few of his remarks. Speaking of Dunedin, Otago, he said: 'The people are essentially Scotch. I saw no person ill-off—the very reverse; and the climate is so conducive to health, that I may say that, having passed over a large portion of the world, I never saw such a multitude of sturdy, rosy children as in that colony of Otago. Whilst I was there, several emigrant ships arrived, and here are the results gathered from Mr. Allan, the emigration agent. There were six blacksmiths, and they received 12s. a day; two bakers, 10s. a day; one bootmaker, 10s. a day; five bricklayers, 12s. and 14s. a day; one butcher, 25s. a week and his food; seventeen carpenters, 12s. a day; four dressmakers, 25s. a week; two engine-drivers, 14s.

a day; 19 farm-servants, L.52 and L.55 per annum and their keep; and so forth. Speaking of farm-servants, these men are well lodged. I saw one or two bothies [huts in which rural labourers are put to live as in a barrack], I am sorry to say, in some of the upper districts, but the general rule is that there is nothing of that sort in the country. These men are better fed and clothed than the great mass of the people in this country; and so far as I could see, they have only eight hours' work in the day. We have had long discussions here about the nine hours' system, and I have always said I greatly prefer the plan which is ascribed to King Alfred of dividing the day into three parts—eight hours for work, eight hours for sleep, and eight hours for devotion and recreation, and other necessary avocations. Where there is such ample time, people cannot find the excuse for absenting themselves from public worship, or keeping their children from school, that many make in this country. Then you have to observe this, that land can be bought absolutely at twenty shillings an acre, so that these ploughmen in the course of a few years can become landlords. In fact, some of them become landlords too soon, because they buy land before they are able to stock it, and sometimes run themselves into difficulties. It is a country surely worthy of being specially noticed, when the working-classes are so situated. It is, in fact, a paradise for working persons in so far as its arrangements are concerned. While the country is to a large extent mountainous, it has splendid plains, and large numbers of sheep-runs, which are often possessed by men who left this country with nothing. To give an instance: one man with whom I staid, who had been a shepherd in Roxburghshire, went out to New Zealand, and he is now a man in the most comfortable circumstances. Highlanders succeed amazingly in that country. I have often thought they scarcely got justice in their own country, and that people did not value that stern peculiarity of character, that firm adhesion to principle, which in New Zealand raises them to the highest rank. The aristocracy of New Zealand, in fact, may be said to be the Highlanders. I staid with the grandson of a Highlander, for example, who has half a million of sheep. I saw another Highlander, who is a member of parliament, and who went there with nothing, I believe, and has one hundred and twenty-five thousand sheep. I heard of two Highlanders who took their stand upon two mountains in New Zealand, and each asked government to give them a lease of the land that they saw from the tops of these respective mountains. They obtained their wish, and are now both wealthy men. From a New Zealand paper to-day I see the Highlanders are so successful that a Chinaman making application for some employment called himself M'Gillivray. The people were astonished. They had never heard a Chinaman called M'Gillivray, and they asked what the meaning of it was. The reply of the Chinaman was, that there was no use of any making application except Scotchmen. When I refer, said Dr Begg, 'to the Chinese, I may say that there is a vast number of them in these countries. They have four thousand Chinese in Otago, and seventeen thousand in Victoria. These Chinese are a very industrious people, but they remain there only for a certain time, and return to their own country.'

There is more than usual interest awakened when Dr Begg remarks: 'The industrial school at Dunedin is exactly to my mind; that is to say, the young people are taught farming, the girls housekeeping and dairy-work; and the result is that they are immediately taken and absorbed into the general population. They have no poor-rate in that country, and that, I hold, is of immense advantage. What is a poor-rate, when properly considered, but simply a rate that allows all to live on each other. It is, in fact, a communistic principle, when you trace it to its results. In that country, the matter is managed by voluntary arrangement; there is no public assessment; no one is entitled to live on his neighbour; and orphan children are trained to be useful.'

Speaking of Australia, he said: 'We have here no real conception of the magnitude or resources of that country. It produces everything required by man, and in its various colonies has immense capabilities. I staid only a week in Melbourne, and I did not penetrate into the interior. Had I attempted anything of the kind, I should have required to stay seven years instead of seven weeks. I had applications to go to all the prominent places. I was extremely anxious to go to Sydney, the capital of New South Wales, which I was specially asked to visit, but I found it was impossible. During my stay in Melbourne, I made the most of my time, and Dr Cairns was kind enough to drive me round the whole neighbourhood. Melbourne, which has a population of about two hundred thousand, is constructed upon an excellent theory; that is to say, it has large open spaces throughout. It has admirable buildings, an excellent library, and an important university. I visited the market, and more beautiful cauliflower, cabbages, turnips, and carrots I never saw before. I likewise visited a meat-curing establishment, being anxious to see the preparation of the meat and the soups that are sent over to this country. The establishment I visited was curing at the rate of three thousand sheep per week, and I was told that the number was sometimes as high as nine thousand. I have no hesitation in saying that if they can produce an article which will find acceptance in this country, it will be an immense boon to our working-classes. I was just telling a friend of mine, a butcher, the other day, that I saw the most beautiful sheep, as fine as you could put on a table, labelled at 2d. a pound. There is no reason why the abundance which reigns in that country should not go to supply the lack which exists here. I preached twice in Melbourne—for Dr Cairns on the Sabbath forenoon, and to another congregation in the evening. The collection that day was for the hospital. In the forenoon, it amounted to nearly L.90; but I was not so much impressed by that as the congregation in the evening, which was, to a large extent, a miscellaneous one. They had made their collection also in the forenoon, but this was a supplementary collection in the evening, and it amounted to about L.50. What struck me most, however, said the reverend doctor, 'was, that forty-five of these pounds were in silver, and five in gold, and that there was just one penny in the plate. I have heard of a minister who said with Paul: "Alexander the coppersmith has done me much evil." A minister cannot say this in that country, for, as far as I understand, there is no copper put into the plate.'

Nothing that the reverend Doctor has said, conveys so vivid an idea of the individual wealth and liberality of the people of Melbourne as this last and very amusing piece of information; from which a hint may be taken in the home country.

IN DANGER.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER IV.

It was the first time that I had found myself in the character of a *convive* at an oriental banquet, and I was quite unprepared to play the still more imposing part of Amphitryon at such an entertainment; but I soon perceived that, the first formal salutation having been paid and civilly acknowledged, nothing more in the way of ceremony was expected from me, and that the guests resumed their task of eating with a vigorous appetite that belongs alone to hardy and frugal people who on rare occasions are indulged with a Gargantuan repast. It was a source of interest to me to watch the progress of the meal: how the piles of snowy rice dwindled; how incessant were the assaults upon the great *pièces de resistance*, the lamb stuffed with Ghilan raisins and chopped herbs; how the thin wooden skewers, thick-set with smoking kabobs of broiled mutton, were passed from hand to hand; and with what omnivorous steadiness the Sheiks of the village plodded through the round of dishes; sweetmeats and fish, stewed meats and preserved apricots, succeeding one another in a fashion that would have maddened a Belgravian butler; and the very plates, which were indeed huge flaps of tough home-baked bread, being greedily devoured before the termination of the feast. The one temperate, or, indeed, abstemious Moslem present was Ali Sahib, who had slipped into a place at the other end of the board, and who contented himself as usual with a spare diet of rice and pulse. Even Ibrahim seemed to have forgotten the blow he had received from Yussef Khan's djereed, and plied his fingers—for I need not say that knives and forks were conspicuous by their absence—as deftly as his neighbours.

The feast was nearly over, when a dismal howl, like that of a famished wolf, resounded without, and was immediately followed by the appearance of a ragged dervish, who strode into the room, bearing in his hand a wooden bowl, in which was a small brass ball that rattled as its owner shook it, uttering the while in the most lugubrious accents the Mohammedan profession of faith. This is an appeal which is seldom or never made in vain, and accordingly there was an immediate untying of sashes and fumbling for purses, and a number of small copper coins dropped into the outstretched alms-bowl of the holy man, who proceeded slowly to make the circuit of the table, all the time calling out in monotonous accents, after the manner of his irregular confraternity: 'Allah is merciful!' 'Allah is most great!' My own contribution was a piece of silver, but the dervish took no apparent notice of this offering, but forthwith laid his bowl aside, and thrusting his hand unceremoniously into the nearest pilaff, began to eat voraciously, now and then interrupting his meal to utter a hoarse and pithy quotation from some Sura of the Koran. I was in no way surprised, knowing the superstitious respect with which religious mendicants of this sort are treated among Mussulmans; but what

attracted my attention was the face of Ali Sahib, which was very pale, as, with dilated eyes and knitted brow, he gazed upon the intruder, who, on his part, seemed to concern himself with nothing but his food and his intermittent vociferations. What was there, in a poor dervish, dipping his greasy fingers into a dish of steaming pilaff, to disturb so cool and experienced a traveller as my trusty interpreter? Could it be that Ali Sahib dreaded lest the man's religious fanaticism should be inflamed to a dangerous pitch, when he had time to recognise that he was in company with a Christian, and did he apprehend peril to me from some outbreak of wild fury, such as are now and then imputed to half-crazed wanderers of this class? Scarcely so, unless all present shared in the same notion, for, as I looked around, I saw nothing but pale and anxious faces, and all eyes seemed stealthily to watch the movements of the dervish. This roving friar, however, did nothing to justify the alarm which his aspect appeared to evoke, and having finished his repast, and recited a few words of praise in Arabic, caught up his bowl and clapper, and stalked off, howling as he went.

It appeared to me as if Ali Sahib had divined my thoughts, for when he rose from table he came up to me, and said, plausibly enough, that he was glad that the dervish had departed so quietly. There was no answering, he declared, for what these privileged vagrants, often partially insane, and not seldom counterfeiting, as a means of influence, the signs of a disordered mind, might do, if suddenly brought into contact with a non-believer in Islam. It was well that he was gone, and he, Ali Sahib, would take care to confer with the Sheiks on the subject of his being prevented from returning. There was indeed a great deal of whispering and talking, and after a time my faithful interpreter came back to say that all was now arranged, and that there would be no risk of annoyance from the dervish. He then listened with interest to my account of what had taken place at the camp, and congratulated me on having got so well through what might have been an awkward scrape.

'I have heard of this Yussef Khan,' he said: 'he is reported on the Afghan frontier to have put out the right eye and cut off the right hand of all the Ghilzie prisoners that fell into his clutches. He has no love for foreigners, too; and altogether, Sahib, you were fortunate to be quit of him so easily. I should like, with your permission, to read to you a translation of the agreement which, subject to your approval, I have this day made with the village elders as regards their trees and minerals. But first—if you choose—I will get you your coffee.' And he was as good as his word, bringing not only several thin leaves of blue paper covered with writing, but also the gay little gilded coffee-pot, the acorn cup of filmy porcelain, and the delicate *zarf* or holder, of dainty silver filigree. But either the coffee was very, very strong, or Ali Sahib was unusually prosy in his explanations, for I can dimly remember that the room seemed to swim round me, that a strange drowsiness came on, that I rose, and staggered on my feet, and dropped down like a log upon the cushions of the divan, and I remember no more.

When I regained my senses, it was twilight already, and the dusk within the house looked the darker for the scud of black clouds flying wildly overhead, and which I could see through the

narrow lattice near me. I called aloud, but no one answered, and I seemed to be alone, while my head felt heavy, and my temples throbbed painfully. There was the long table, yet encumbered by broken meats and flaps of bread and pitchers of sherbet, the relics of the feast, and I had been lying on the softly cushioned divan, a pillow beneath my head, and a heavy quilted covering flung across me as I lay. It cost me a great effort to rise from my recumbent position, so considerable was the languor which I felt, while my head was heavy, and my eyes dim. What had occurred? Was I ill—sickenings, perhaps, of some marsh-fever? But then, if so, why was I left alone, and where was Ali Sahib? Then, for the first time, I perceived that, whilst insensible, I had been divested of my coat and waistcoat, and that my cravat had also been removed. Scarcely knowing what to make of this, I groped my way to the small bed-chamber which had been assigned to me, as a guest of importance, apart from the selamluk, or general apartment for the male members of the family, and, striking a light, discovered that my scanty baggage had vanished. My purse, however, my watch, and rings, and a weighty bag of silver dollars which belonged to the Company, lay neatly spread out upon a small table, and on the bed was a suit of clothes, which I recognised as the property of Ali Sahib, carefully prepared, as if for my wear, while on a piece of paper that was pinned to the sleeve of the robe, were the words awkwardly written in cramped characters, but still legible: 'A fair exchange is no loot. Aleikum salaam, master!' What could this portend? Practical joking is a thing so alien to eastern ideas, that I could not for a moment entertain the notion that I was the victim of a mere prank; and besides, Ali Sahib, grave, courteous, and urbane, was not the man whom it would be possible to suspect of a turn for idle jesting. Suddenly a thought flashed through my mind—the coffee must have been drugged! I could feel, even then, the strong narcotic fighting with my powers of thought and volition. Yes; I was sure, now, that treachery had been deliberately planned; but why, or for what purpose, had my perfidious Mentor thus hoisted and deserted me? Had plunder been his object, he would surely not have thus scrupulously set aside my valuables; whereas, as I have said, my money was intact, and my watch and rings left untouched.

I went through the house, calling aloud, but the sullen echoes of the empty rooms alone answered me. The harem door was fastened, but I heard no babble, as usual, of female voices from within, and I knocked and shouted in vain. Doubtless, the people with whom I was lodged were accomplices of Ali Sahib, and had quitted their dwelling at his behest, but why, or for what purpose, I could not conjecture. My bewildered brain grew gradually clearer, and I began to bethink me of the necessity for action. It seemed clear that Ali Sahib was gone, carrying off with him my clothes and baggage, and that he was not likely to return. The owners of the house were of course in league with him, and should I remain where I was, the cupidity of the peasants might prompt them to murder me, for the sake of the cash in my possession; while at best I was in a precarious position, far from the sea, and imperfectly acquainted with the language. What should I do? After some

reflection, it occurred to me that my best course would be, to return to the camp, and to request the young prince, Mirza Hussein, kindly to give me the means of returning to the harbour where the rest of the party awaited me. He, as being at once educated and in authority, could easily comprehend my story, and enable me to struggle through my present embarrassment; whereas, I could not rely either on the honesty or on the intelligence of the villagers, now that I had been cheated and abandoned by my interpreter.

How was I to attire myself, however, for the road? I had no coat or waistcoat, no hat or cap, left to me. Making a virtue of necessity, though with some reluctance, I put on the tight-fitting under tunic, the robe, and the shawl-girdle of my treacherous guide; wound the glistening white turban around my head, and selecting a spiked staff from a bundle of ironshod sticks which I found in a corner of the selamluk, I set off at once on the long walk to the camp. As I passed through the village, every house was dark and every door closed, as if the plague had swept the place of its inhabitants. I could not but connect this remarkable exodus of the rural population with the mysterious disappearance of Ali Sahib, though what motive could have prompted such extraordinary behaviour on his part, was quite beyond my powers of guessing. It was now dark and cloudy; the wind sang shrilly amidst the tree-tops, and it appeared to me as if a storm were coming on; but the fresh air that cooled my heated brow was very welcome, and by degrees the fever of my blood abated, and the dull pain in my throbbing temples grew less, as I proceeded on my way. The first part of my route was sufficiently easy; but when I got fairly among the hills, it needed all my recollection of the various landmarks which I had noted in the morning, to enable me to steer a proper course; and at length arriving at a place where several paths met, I chose the wrong one, and after floundering for some time among thickets and boulders of stone, found that I had strayed from the right track, and must either retrace my steps, or persevere, in hopes of finding another road to the camp.

While I stood perplexed, a faint, but distinctly audible sound, as of many voices chanting in unison, reached my ears, and proved to me that I was at no great distance from human help; while I fancied that through the trees I could see a red glow, as from a furnace-mouth suddenly opened, although in a few moments the ruby light again faded into the general darkness. Who could these neighbours be? Charcoal-burners, perhaps; probably a caravan of pilgrims or traders; possibly robbers bivouacking in the forest. In the latter case, it would be unwise for a stranger, and the bearer of so large a sum as I had about me, to venture on approaching them; but the chances were rather in favour of the former supposition; and therefore I resolved to draw near, but cautiously, so as to reconnoitre the appearance of the party before disclosing myself. Advancing slowly, therefore, I scaled a steep bank, and peering down from betwixt the boles of two gigantic trees, I looked into a little grassy valley, some twelve or fifteen feet below, and beheld one of the most singular spectacles that, in a century of material progress and mental enlightenment, can easily be conceived. The narrow glen was crowded with worshippers,

robed in pure white, all of whom, men, women, and children, were in the act of prostrating themselves before an altar built of a few huge flat stones, set on a swelling mound, and which instantly reminded me of the rude hill-shrines of Baal, so frequently mentioned in the Scripture narrative. The fire was burning low, and threw but a dim and weird light upon the assembly; yet there was brightness enough to illumine the solitary figure of a man, the high-priest, as I supposed, of this strange and occult rite, who stood with outspread arms beside the altar, rapidly repeating some formula of faith, as I judged, in a tongue necessarily unknown to me. He, too, was clad in white, but wore a streaming scarf of pale blue, while on his head shone a fantastic mitre, bedecked with gold and precious stones; and in his right hand was a slender silver wand, such as a magician of the middle ages might have been supposed to carry. Round his waist was clasped a broad belt of leather, the yellow colour of which instantly brought to my recollection the Gheber in Moore's *Fire-worshippers*.

Fire-worshippers! I rubbed my eyes, as if to awaken myself from some troublesome dream. Yes; the conviction forced itself upon me that these on whom I looked were no counterfeits, no theatrical representatives of Mithra-worshippers, but genuine confessors of the belief in fire as the divine principle. I had heard, vaguely, that in remote nooks of Persia, there yet lurked a few congregations of this persecuted remnant of believers in the old religion of Iran, not as yet converted or extirpated by the stern rule of Islam. And here I had before me such a gathering of the adherents of a conquered and proscribed creed; while, as certain acolytes of the priest approached and flung fuel on the flames, so that the ruddy light leaped up again, I saw the prostrate forms arise once more, and heard many voices take up the measure of a wild chant, some hymn to the Sun, doubtless, in ancient Pehlivi poetry, and probably as little intelligible to most of the hearers as ecclesiastical Latin to a crowd of Italian rustics.

But what now chiefly attracted my attention was the aspect of the officiating priest, now very plainly visible in the full glare of the fire. I seemed, singular to say, to know him. Those keen striking features, transfigured as they now appeared to be under the influence of passionate excitement, where and when had I seen them last, and whose was the well-known face that appeared beneath the jewelled and quaintly shaped mitre? While I was puzzling my wits in the effort to guess the answer to this enigma, my ear caught a sound, which resembled nothing so much as the deep, earth-shaking tramp of many horses rapidly approaching. The voices of the assembly were now raised to their highest pitch in the wild and prolonged chanting, and this probably prevented the singers from distinguishing the ominous sound of the coming hoofs. Presently, however, the chant ceased abruptly, and was succeeded by a roar of anguish and alarm in the deep voices of men, blended with the shriller cries of female voices, as a body of Mussulman cavalry dashed at full speed into the meadow, and rode furiously, with levelled spears, down upon the panic-stricken mob of white-robed worshippers. 'Allah Akhbar!' 'For God and the Prophet!' 'Kill, kill!' Such were the shouts that rang in my ears, as the fierce riders swept on with lowered lances and brandished sabres, in

pursuit of the fugitives, who broke up and fled, as helpless, for all purposes of resistance, as so many sheep assailed by a pack of hungry wolves. The altar was roughly overthrown, and the fire scattered, but the flames igniting the dry fern and brushwood that were piled hard by, there rose up a broad and lurid glare, by the crimson light of which I could observe the details of the confused and hideous scene.

Many were trampled under the feet of the galloping horses, while others were struck down or pierced by the swords and spears of the pitiless soldiery, who, with bloodthirsty cries of 'Kill, kill! Deen, deen! For the holy Imams!' encouraged one another in the work of slaughter. Others fled, shrieking, and tearing off as they ran the fatal white garments that made them so conspicuous to the pursuers. The priest had disappeared, while more and more armed men seemed to pour into the meadow, and the frequent report of musketry echoed through the woods. One shot, perhaps fired at random, cut away a slender twig not six inches from my head, and ploughed its furrow in the thick bark of the tree beside me, so that I thought it better to scramble down and take refuge in the centre of a clump of elms some paces distant, tho rather that the tide of flight and chase seemed to be ebbing towards the opposite extremity of the glen, and that there seemed to be little prospect of my being disturbed. Scarcely, however, had I gained this place of shelter, before I heard a sobbing cry like that of a hunted hare, and saw come running swiftly towards me, as if winged by mortal terror, a barefooted child, a young girl of some ten years old, whom I recognised as the youngest daughter of the peasant who was my late host. Her dark hair was loose, her features sharpened by pain and fear, and I noticed that there was blood on her white dress, while behind her bounded a fierce horseman, his right arm flung back, and his scimitar flashing, as he derided her efforts to escape. That swarthy, savage face, the brutal laugh, the vest of cloth of gold, could belong to none but Yussef Khan. Fear, which had hitherto lent unnatural speed to the youthful fugitive, now suddenly seemed to benumb her feet; for as she glanced back and saw the rider close behind, she fell upon her knees, and held up her hands imploringly, with an inarticulate prayer for mercy.

With a mocking laugh, El Zagal whirled the glittering sword-blade around his head, to give force to the impending blow; but I could bear no more, and rushing forward, grasped the bridle so vigorously, that the fiery horse reared up arrow-straight under the pressure of the powerful bit, pawed the air for a moment, and then fell back with a crash, unseating his rider; while the child, obeying the instinct of self-preservation, fled like a hunted fawn into the thicket, and was seen no more. I have a very confused remembrance of what followed, until, after a scramble and a scuffle, during which I had more than one very narrow escape of being sabred or pistolled, I found myself, with my hands tightly bound together, one of a group of prisoners, all of whom, save myself, were more or less severely wounded, while of our ultimate fate there seemed little doubt, since four or five stout fellows—tent-pitchers, as I guessed, from the camp—were busy in selecting some convenient boughs of a forked shape, whereto they might affix the camel-halters which they bore along with them, and

which were already adjusted with running-nooses, the purport of which was only too intelligible. A number of soldiers, horse and foot, were around, and the whole proceedings appeared to be under the superintendence of a richly dressed officer, my old enemy, Yussef Khan. As for my fellow-captives, whose lineaments were unknown to me, they seemed apathetically sullen and silent, and uttered no word of petition or complaint.

Such, however, was far from being my own case, for mustering all the available Persian words that I knew, I loudly accosted Yussef Khan by name, demanding to be taken before the prince, Mirza Hussein, without delay, and calling on him to bear witness that I was a stranger and an Englishman, who had that very day been the guest of his general, and who had in no manner rendered himself amenable to the Persian law, whatever it might be. To all which appeal El Zagal listened with cynical indifference, smoking his jewelled pipe the while with an air of infinite enjoyment, and eyeing me with a sort of grim humour, such as that with which a cat regards the feeble efforts of a maimed mouse to crawl away towards its hole. There was no mistaking the wretch's expression of cruel malignity; and as I remembered that I had baffled and unhorsed him, and noted the smears of dust and clay that marked the gay housings of his steed, as it stood close by, and which were more faintly visible on the brave attire of the rider, my heart sank within me, and I began to prepare myself for the worst. After all, if this truculent scoundrel were resolved to put me to death summarily along with the poor Fire-worshippers who had fallen into his hands, he ran no especial risk of future retribution. I had been taken, in an oriental garb, in the midst of the members of this persecuted sect, and in an attempt to resist a royal officer. That my interference to save a helpless child from the sharp edge of El Zagal's scimitar, was prompted by the inmost instinct of humanity, availed me nothing. 'Jeddart justice, to be hanged first, and tried afterwards,' according to the old Border saying, was the pleasant prospect before me.

To die thus! And at the very time, too, when Fortune had seemed to smile upon me, and when my youthful day-dreams of love and happiness had appeared on the point of being realised! I felt a distinct thrill of pain as I recalled Kate's sweet face, and pictured to myself the long hoping against hope, the earling care, the bitter grief, that would sadden that faithful young heart to which I was so dear. It was all at an end, then, that vision of a pleasant home and a fond wife, of competence and success, and of the well-earned repose to be enjoyed, one day, in England. I was to perish miserably, to gratify the malice of a savage; and it might be long before tidings of my fate should reach the headquarters of the Caspian Navigation Company. These meditations were, however, cut short by the murmur of curiosity and excitement among the bystanders which greeted the arrival of a ruffianly looking fellow, with a bundle at his back, and followed by two half-clad lads laden with similar burdens, and whose squalid and wild aspect gave them a strong likeness to gipsies of the middle ages. The man made a profound obeisance to El Zagal, and then rolled up his loose sleeves to the shoulder, baring a pair of long and hairy arms like the limbs of some enormous spider, a simile that was warranted also by the ungainly shape of

his broad body. Meanwhile the lads hastily began, with bamboo bellows and pan of glowing charcoal, to kindle a hot fire, in which, one by one, they inserted, at their master's bidding, certain iron instruments, not unlike those used by a smith. But the newcomer, who, from time to time, eyed me with an unpleasant air of proprietorship, bore no signs of the smith's craft—a butcher, more likely, to judge by the dull brown-red stains on his blue garments. But what does a butcher want with red-hot pincers and tongs, and strange circles of glowing iron! Presently, as I caught Yussef Khan's cruel glance fixed on me with a meaning expression, the hideous truth forced itself upon me, that the man beside the fire was the executioner of the camp, and that I was to be tortured before being put to death.

My blood ran cold, as I recalled many a vague but horrible report of oriental cruelty, and remembered how utterly I was in the power of my unscrupulous enemy. Despair gave me strength, I suppose, for, by a violent effort, I succeeded in bursting the bonds that manacled my hands, and shouting loudly the name of Mirza Hussein, sprang to my feet. Yussef Khan laughed hoarsely as he made a sign to his attendants, who rushed forward at once, and by their united strength overpowered me, and dragged me towards the fire. I shuddered as I felt the grasp of the executioner fasten on my bare wrist, and as, in obedience to his injunctions, the tent-pitchers proceeded to bind me to a tough sapling that stood near the fire. I think El Zagal must have made some sign to the tormentor, for the wretch, with a guttural sound of assent, instantly selected, from amidst the lumps of glowing charcoal, a pair of pincers heated to a cherry-red, and came shambling back towards me. I closed my eyes, with a groan of despair; but almost at the same moment I heard the sound of galloping hoofs, and immediately afterwards there arose a cry of dismay, as a horseman dashed into the centre of the group, overturning the brasier and the hot coals, and upsetting at the same time the executioner and his assistants. Nor did the wild rider content himself with this, for, throwing his horse on its haunches by one jerk of the powerful bit, he waved his flashing sword around him in a style that soon cleared a sufficient space, in the midst of which I alone was left standing.

'Don't you know me?' cried out the horseman, who wore the uniform, so far as I could make out, of a Persian top-bashi, or captain of artillery. 'I am Demetrius Vassili, the poor Pole whom you found starving by the roadside, like a masterless dog, and who comes now, in the nick of time, to prove that even a renegade may be grateful for old kindness.—Keep back!' he added, in broken Persian, as he flourished his sword before the astonished eyes of Yussef Khan. 'Lay not a finger on the Frank. The prince is at hand, and your head answers for that of his guest.' And indeed, before El Zagal and his followers had time to recover from their surprise, Mirza Hussein, with a numerous escort, rode up at a rapid pace; and at the sight of his lifted hand and the sound of his angry voice, the executioner and his squalid attendants slunk away; while the khan himself drew a step or two backwards, and folded his arms sullenly across his broad breast. The Pole sprang from his horse, and anticipated the prince's orders by severing the cords that bound me. 'My

preserver—my friend—my brother!’ he whispered; ‘how could I ever have forgiven myself, had I been too late to save you from these fiends! A false shame prompted me, when you were seated in Mirza Hussein’s tent, to keep out of your sight, since I did not wish you to behold me as what I am now—a Moslem who has embraced Islam, as outcasts do, to earn bread beneath the turban. Not for ever, though, please the saints! The day may come when Demetrius Vassili, at home again in Warsaw, may live and die as a Pole and a Christian. For the moment, however, he is Mustafa Beg, captain in the Shah’s artillery; and as such it luckily came to his ears that the Left-handed was going to play a pretty trick to the English traveller; and he was able to frustrate the malice of yonder scowling demon.’

And very like a demon balked of his prey did El Zagal look as he received what was evidently a stern reprimand from the prince, who next rode up to me, and dismounted, saying courteously, in his fluent French: ‘Accept my regrets and my excuses, monsieur, for this very unpleasant affair, which I felicitate myself for having prevented from turning to an irreparable misfortune. Permit me to inquire, however, by what unlucky accident you found yourself thus disguised as an Asiatic, amongst these miserable idolaters, whom it has been our painful duty to chastise?’

In compliance with this request, I at once related the story of the mysterious disappearance of Ali Sahib, carrying with him my clothes and baggage, and leaving me no choice but my present travesty; on hearing of which, the young prince’s brow cleared, and he absolutely clapped his hands and laughed aloud, as at a joke too exquisite for even his politeness to be proof against it.

‘Dobresjee himself!’ he exclaimed, still laughing; ‘Dobresjee, for a thousand tomana, and again has the clever knave slipped through our fingers, like an eel. If I catch him, I shall, of course, direct his skin to be flayed off, and carefully stuffed with straw, to be hung up in front of his majesty’s palace at Teheran; but, for all that, I shall regret to proceed to extremities with a rogue so dexterous. Coquin, va!’ And seeing my bewilderment, the prince proceeded to explain that the government did not absolutely prohibit the worship of fire as practised by the small remnant of Guebers existing in Persia, but was severe in punishing such of the Sun-worshippers as persisted in assembling by night, and in lonely places, to celebrate their ancient rites, more especially when any political purpose was thought to be mixed up with the old superstition of Iran.

Mirza Hussein informed me further, that a secret understanding prevailed between the Parsees of India—a powerful and wealthy body—and their impoverished co-religionists in Persia, and that missionaries were sent out to keep alive the old zeal for Mithra in the hearts of many professing Moslems, chiefly in the province of Mazanderan. Of these emissaries, the most adroit and zealous was a Parsee fanatic named Dobresjee, a man who had run a thousand risks in his various expeditions to Persia, and whom it was easy to identify with my treacherous interpreter, Ali Sahib. No doubt, the dervish was a Gueber spy in disguise; and had conveyed to Dobresjee the information that his presence in the country was known; a traitor having, in fact, betrayed the

Fire-worshippers to the general in command of the Persian force charged to suppress unlawful assemblages of the suspected. Wherefore, I had been drugged, and my clothes stolen, that Ali Sahib, or Dobresjee, might make his escape in European garb; my late entertainers having all been secret adherents of the old faith. My chancing to be present when the gathering of Fire-worshippers was suppressed by the military, El Zagal’s eagerness to wreak his spite safely on a victim who seemed delivered over to him, and my rescue through the instrumentality of my grateful Pole, now an officer in the Shah’s service, were easy to comprehend. It was also the belief of Mirza Hussein that the mitre-wearing arch-priest was no other than Dobresjee himself, and that he had eluded pursuit, and, dressed in my garments, was on his way to the frontier, which the connivance of the country-people would enable him to reach.

I have little more to tell. The kindness of Mirza Hussein enabled me to travel under safe escort to the coast; and the rainy season having set in just then, we were able to float down to the Caspian the valuable timber which had been felled, and to return to Kizil-Bateh, towing after our steamer a chain of rafts, the net profit on which exceeded three thousand pounds. The information which I had acquired proved useful to the Company, since we soon established a regular trade with Mazanderan for the produce of that district, and my appointment as engineer-in-chief was at once made permanent. I have a better appointment now, being sub-manager at Astrakhan, with hopes of succeeding to my present chief on his retirement; and Kate has been long my wife, and she and her mother happily and comfortably settled with me in the wild land in which we have made our home.

TO STOP BY SIGNAL.

‘WHAT station is this, Wilson?’ cried an old gentleman, looking out of the window.

His servant, a demure-looking man, in black, who had just got out of a second-class carriage, touched his hat, and replied: ‘I don’t know, sir; I’ll ask the guard.—Yes, sir, Sloughton station, sir.’

‘There ought to be a board with the name on it,’ cried the old gentleman testily.—‘Guard, why isn’t there a board to this station?’

‘So there is, sir, at the other end of the platform.’

‘Then, why doesn’t the train stop where people can read it?—How am I to know when we get to Pugborough, Wilson?’

‘We shan’t be at Pugborough for this hour, sir,’ cried the guard.—‘Come, jump in, sir’—to Wilson, who resumed his seat. The whistle sounded, the train went on.

At the very next station they came to, the old gentleman put his head out of the window again.

‘Hi, Wilson!’

Wilson jumped out of his carriage, and came to his master, and touched his hat once more.

‘Is this Pugborough, Wilson?’

‘No, sir! This is Much Munkton.’

‘Now, take your seat,’ cried the guard; for only one passenger had alighted, and none had entered the train.

At the next station the same scene was repeated.

‘Come, sir,’ cried the guard, who was tired of hearing the old man’s voice, ‘don’t trouble yourself

any more. I'll be sure and let you know when you come to Pugborough.'

'Will you!' cried the old gentleman, apparently much gratified. 'Upon my word, you're very kind. I didn't like to ask you, for I know how much you have to do.'

'It's only my dooty, sir,' says the guard, slamming to the door.

'Hi, guard!' cries the old gentleman.

'Yes, sir,' replies the guard impatiently, returning to the carriage door.

'You're quite sure, now! you're quite sure, eh! you won't forget me at Pugborough?'

'O no, sir,' said the guard; 'that'll be all right.'

'And Wilson—where's Wilson?—Oh, hero, Wilson; you won't forget my box, Wilson, when we get to Pugborough?'

'No, sir,' says Wilson, scrambling into his seat once more.

'Troublesome old chap that,' said the guard as he swung himself into his van. 'I mustn't forget him at Pugborough. There's no other passenger for there.'

Now, Pugborough was one of those mysterious places that are marked with a cross or dagger in *Bradshaw*, and if you succeed in unearthing a corresponding dagger in some obscure corner of the page, you will find 'Stops at Pugborough to take up and set down first-class London passengers only.'

Whether it was that the guard, in his excess of anxiety to remember, had blunted his faculties, or that some spiteful Puck had given his wits a bewildering shake, I know not, but somehow it happened that the guard forgot to warn the engine-driver; and when the man looked up from his parcels, he found, to his dismay, that the train was flashing along some half-mile past the little Pugborough station.

To signal to the driver and put on the brake, was the work of an instant. The train was brought to a stand-still, and then slowly backed to the station, amidst the fierce denunciations of the through-passengers.

The guard himself was much out of temper, angry with himself for his forgetfulness, angry with the old gentleman for having given him so much trouble.

'Now, then!' he shouted to the man-servant. 'Sharp! Look after your master's traps.—Here you are, sir,' he cried, opening the first-class carriage. 'Here's Pugborough. Now, sir, if you please!'

The old gentleman was asleep, and couldn't be roused to a sense of the situation for some time. He growled and grumbled; at last, fully roused, he stared at the guard with lack-lustre eyes.

'Pugborough, is it Pugborough? Thank you, guard; I remember. Where's Wilson?—Wilson! Wilson! where's my box?'

'Never mind your box, sir—I'll see to the luggage. Jump out quick, please.'

'Jump out!' cried the old gentleman; 'jump out! Why should I jump out? Who said anything about getting out?'

'What!' cried the guard, aggrieved to the very verge of desperation. 'Haven't you been bothering about Pugborough ever since we left Euston?'

'At your own request, guard,' said the old gentleman calmly, 'I intrusted you with the duty of warning me of my arrival at Pugborough. I should have preferred to leave the task to my own servant.—Ah! here's the box.—Thank you, Wilson,'

said the old gentleman, taking from his servant's hands a small pink box.

'The fact is,' said the old gentleman, calmly opening the box, and looking benignly at the excited guard, 'that my daughter gave me the most particular injunctions. "Mind, papa," she said, "be sure you take a pill at Pugborough."'

The old gentleman could never understand why the carriage door was dashed to with such terrific violence, the whistle sounded with such a fiendish yell, and Wilson whirled into his carriage without being permitted to take charge once more of his master's pill-box.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

AMONG the papers read before the Royal Society during the present session, are some which if popularised would attract numerous readers, so pregnant are they with important facts. One of these by Mr W. Crookes, F.R.S. treats of the action of heat on gravitating masses, and in its details of highly refined and accurate experiments demonstrates that substances are repelled by heat and attracted by cold. The experiments were made with a balance formed of a beam of straw with a pith-ball at each end. A lighter balance could hardly be devised. It was tried in common air, and in a vacuum, and from its behaviour certain conclusions were drawn. A similar series of experiments was made with a brass beam bearing two brass balls, and with corroborative results. It is therefore clear that density and temperature play an important part in the production of the phenomena. And if they do, what then? may be asked. The answer connects itself with one of the grandest problems of science. Nature offers evidence of the repulsive action of heat, and the attractive action of cold on the grandest scale. By the radiation of heat from the sun may be explained the phenomena of comets, and the shape and changes of nebulae. And as Mr Crookes remarks: 'To compare small things with great, to argue from pieces of straw up to heavenly bodies, it is not improbable that the attraction, now shewn to exist between a cold and a warm body, will equally prevail when, for the temperature of melting ice is substituted the cold of space, for a pith-ball a celestial sphere, and for an artificial vacuum a stellar void. In the radiant molecular energy of cosmical masses may at last be found that "agent acting constantly according to certain laws" which Newton held to be the cause of gravity.' From this it will be seen that Mr Crookes has started an investigation which in its results may explain the theory of the universe.

Another paper, On the Atmosphere as a Vehicle of Sound, by Dr Tyndall, F.R.S. gives the result of an inquiry, undertaken at the instance of the Trinity House, to ascertain the distance at which sounds could be heard in foggy weather. Light-houses are comparatively useless during fogs; and a ship in a fog is helpless. Hence, if a sound could be produced which could be heard miles from the shore, mariners, hindered from using their eyes, might be warned through their ears. The experiments were made off the South Foreland with trumpets blown by powerfully compressed air, with steam-whistles, guns, and a steam-siren attached to a trumpet sixteen feet long. From two to three miles was the limit at which the

whistles could be heard; the trumpets from three to four miles; but the eighteen-pounder gun excelled them all, and seemed to settle the question, when one day on which angry clouds darkened the sky, the sounds were heard to a distance of nine miles. On a subsequent day, the syren made itself heard at ten miles; a distance far enough if it could be maintained under all circumstances. But there is the difficulty. The atmosphere varies, sometimes as it seems capriciously; and on bright days when all Nature smiles, sounds travel to a shorter distance through the air, than on days that look very unfavourable. In those very bright days when distant objects are seen with unusual distinctness, the air is filled with watery vapour; and this invisible vapour is, as Dr Tyndall states, 'the real enemy to the transmission of sound through the atmosphere.' Neither hail, nor rain, nor haze, nor fog, nor snow, prevents the passage of sound; but invisible watery vapour does. The solution of the difficulty is, 'to make the source of sound so powerful as to be able to endure loss by partial reflection (among the watery vapours), and still retain a sufficient residue for transmission.' Of all the instruments yet tried, the syren blown by steam at a pressure of seventy pounds to the inch best answers the purpose; and if one were established at each lighthouse station round our coast, navigation in thick weather would be freed from one of its most threatening dangers.

(The principle of the syren is a movable disk with radial slits, centred on a fixed disk with similar slits. A blast of steam makes the loose disk spin round with great velocity, the steam flies through the slits, and produces a continuous and vehement scream.)

We learn from another paper that Professor Abel is still carrying on his investigation of gun-cotton and other explosives. Some of his results are surprising. A loose yarn of gun-cotton, if gently set on fire by a spark, smoulders slowly away, but burns rapidly if lit by a flame. A charge of cotton in blasting a mine or quarry, or in a rifle, explodes after the manner of gunpowder; but if fired by a few grains of fulminate of mercury it 'goes off' with terrific violence, and can therefore be applied for blasting purposes on a tremendous scale. Another remarkable fact is, that gun-cotton can be as advantageously exploded when damp as when dry, and yet when wet it resists fire as a wet blanket would. But place with it a cake of dry cotton, and fire by means of the fulminate, and the shock will be as terrific as that above mentioned. Moreover, the same effect can be produced under water, with the advantage that a water-tight case to hold the materials is not required. And, as regards speed, it appears that an explosion of gun-cotton travels nearly twenty thousand feet in a second.

In particulars recently published, of the production of salt in Cheshire, we learn that, in 1871, a million and a half tons of salt were sent out of that country to foreign lands and the home market. The demand increases, and the supply as yet shews no sign of failure, for the salt district occupies about twenty-six square miles, of which not more than five have hitherto been worked. As a single square yard of surface is reckoned to cover one hundred and twenty tons of salt, it will be understood that the total quantity is amazing!

A remarkably interesting Report on the voyage

of the *Challenger* discovery-ship up to the time of her arrival at the Cape of Good Hope, has been published by the Admiralty. To all who desire further knowledge of physical geography and oceanic phenomena, it will be especially acceptable. The particulars are furnished by Captain Nares, commander of the vessel: they comprise, the temperature of the sea in different latitudes, the extent of warm and cold areas, the depth, the nature and form of the bottom; and these being represented in coloured diagrams, can be clearly understood. By a little study of these diagrams, any one may see that the Atlantic is, so to speak, cut up into a series of basins, among which three are very remarkable: from New York to Bermuda, from Halifax to Bermuda, and from Bermuda to St Thomas. Soundings taken in the neighbourhood of Bermuda prove it to be a solitary peak in the midst of the sea, having a base of not more than one hundred and twenty miles in diameter.

The southern and eastern boundary of the Gulf Stream was determined within three hundred miles of the Azores, 2250 miles from the source of that great stream, which, as Captain Nares remarks, 'has not lost one particle of heat in travelling that enormous distance.' That this heat plays an important part in the physics of the globe, may be imagined, seeing that the whole mass of warmed water is estimated at two million square miles in extent, and a thousand feet in thickness. Many an exploration will have to be made before the uses and effects of this vast reservoir of heat can be discovered. From this brief notice, it will be understood that the Report is worth reading, and the more so, as it furnishes what may be regarded as 'latest intelligence' concerning the resources and condition of the places visited by the *Challenger*.

The annual Report of the Director of the Imperial Mint at Osaka, Japan, has been published with details, shewing that the Japanese are as active in improving their coinage as in adapting themselves to the new circumstances brought into existence by railways and undersea telegraphs. The number of gold and silver pieces coined in 1873 was more than twenty-six million, worth more than twenty-nine million dollars. The value of the silver pieces is indicated by Japanese characters on one side, and by Roman numerals on the other. Excellence of quality and workmanship are alike cared for; and by order of the Imperial Minister of Finance, specimens of the metals were sent to England with a request that they might be tested at the Royal Mint. The leading places in the Japanese mint are filled by thirteen Englishmen, who direct the native workmen, and find them apt to learn. Besides coining, they make assays of all kinds of minerals, including coal; and we are informed that laboratories are in successful operation, and that sulphuric acid and nitric acid are manufactured in quantities which will soon render importation from Europe unnecessary. It seems clear that ere long Japan will play an important part in the commerce and arts of the world.

Mr Scott Russell, F.R.S. the designer of the great central dome of the Vienna Exhibition building, described the construction of that gigantic roof at a recent meeting of the Institute of British Architects. It is the largest dome in the world, being nine times larger than St Paul's, eight times larger than St Peter's at Rome, and seven times larger than that of St Sophia at Constantinople,

and yet it is so contrived, one part supporting another so cleverly, that it could be built without scaffolding; another advantage in a dome thus constructed is, that it will not fall: the apparent supports may be cut away, and yet it stands, and could be destroyed only by piecemeal shattering. In the course of his description, Mr Scott Russell gave details which all professional men will read and study with pleasure and profit, but he also said much that will interest the general reader. He holds that architects and engineers should know something of each other's profession: if they did, engineering works would not be so distressingly ugly as they are at present, and architecture would gain in methods of construction. He contends also for excellence of workmanship, and that is a quality which in these days is too much disregarded. Similarity and symmetry of parts, says Mr Scott Russell, are essential to success in any great engineering work. Then there must be perfection of fit, instead of things being done as they generally are, nearly right, but not quite. To be 'perfectly exact' is in the long-run much easier than to be nearly exact. It costs also less money; but it requires more brain. These are truisms; but as the world always forgets them, they will bear unceasing repetition.

We all like to know what we are worth, whether we are strong or weak, and how we compare with our neighbours. This, through the publication of another volume of the Census Report, we can now do on the very largest scale; for we learn that the entire population of the British Empire, embracing regions in all parts of the world, is two hundred and thirty-four millions. They inhabit 7,769,449 square miles of territory, dwell in more than forty-four million houses, grouped for the most part in 2200 towns and villages. These are surprising numbers; they imply conquest and colonisation on the grandest scale; yet, notwithstanding the numbers that have gone forth from these islands, the increase here at home still goes on, and we can now reckon more than thirty-one millions. Among so many, there surely will be always enough to maintain in their integrity, liberty, truth, and justice all over the world.

Another example of the assistance which photography may give to the scientific study of natural phenomena, was exemplified at a meeting of the Photographic Society by twenty-six views of the eruption of Vesuvius in 1872, shewing the 'different phases of the eruption, the aspect of the great terminal crater of the mountain after the eruption, and the damage done by, and structural peculiarities of the lava stream.' Such a pictorial record of a volcanic outburst has never before been taken; and as evidence of what really took place, we may believe that it will long have an especial value for geologists.

Mr C. H. Hall, of New York, has invented a machine for lifting water, which he calls a Pulsometer. It operates by a series of throbs or pulses, and, in this particular, reminds us of the water-ram, but has steam for its motive-power, yet is so simple in construction, that all the usual apparatus of a steam-pump is dispensed with. In the pulsometer, as we are informed, 'steam and water are brought directly in contact in certain chambers, where the alternating vacuum and pressure exerted by the steam is simply utilised to lift and force the water.'

To convey a notion of the machine without a diagram is not easy, but we may liken it roughly to a couple of soda-water bottles standing side by side, the necks curving towards each other and meeting atop, while the bottoms are connected by a chamber which has a round hole at each extremity to receive a ball that rolls from one to the other, and acts as a valve. The bottles being filled with water, steam is admitted into one; the water is forced out through the discharge-chamber, until the level is reduced so low that the ball, above mentioned, released from pressure, rolls from one hole to the other, and leaves the steam free to eject the water from the other bottle; and with this alternating movement going rapidly on, a continuous stream is poured from the discharge-pipe, to any desired point, with a force equal to the pressure of the steam in the supplying boiler.

It is perhaps an advantage in the pulsometer that it is cast in one single piece: weak or leaky joints are, therefore, out of the question. It is said to be 'excellently adapted for pumping water from mines, inasmuch as it is not liable to derangement or injury from grit;' and for the same reason it renders good service in excavations where quick-sands or mud occur. It can be used also for irrigation, for draining, for filling tanks, and on board ship as a bilge-pump, deck-pump, or fire-extinguisher. And if it be required to raise water to a great height by a comparatively low pressure of steam, it can be done by placing pulsometers one above the other, and connecting their discharge and suction pipes. If some clever artificer would contrive a pulsometer to pump up street mud into the scavengers' carts, street-cleaning would be accelerated, and a nuisance would be divested of much of its annoyance.

A locomotive to run without fire or smoke has been tried at Chicago. The boiler was charged with steam from a large boiler at the dépôt, and with this supply it ran three miles in ten minutes drawing a heavy car, the pressure of the steam being one hundred and seventy pounds. On the return journey the pressure was ninety pounds, and the experiment was regarded as a satisfactory proof that the fireless locomotive is the best form of street engine yet constructed. No fireman is necessary, very little steam escapes, and the small size of the engine saves horses from alarm, and tends to public safety.

D A W N.

THERE is a solemn stillness in the air;
The moon attended by a single star
Shines high in placid ether; eastward far
Along the horizon's edge, there is a glare
Of orange brilliance, and above it fair
And paly blue the sky, without a bar
Of streaky cloud the pure expanse to mar,
Is tinctured with the coming splendour.—There!
The fulgent head springs, and a million rays
Dazzle; my study-room is charmed with light,
A golden picture of its window plays
On the green book-case, and a shadowy wight
Behind me sits; and, as I turn to gaze,
Mocks all my motions like an elfish sprite.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.
Also sold by all Booksellers.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 536.

SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

ROUND THE BESOM BUOY.

WHERE I got my turn for mechanics and that inventive faculty, I cannot guess. Assuredly, not from my mother, who thought it the whole duty of man to be unexceptionable in his accoutrements, and to whom my grimy hands and slovenly apparel were a source of constant wonder and dismay. Certainly, not from my father, the respected justices' clerk of the ancient port and town of Tharborough. I never shall forget his face when I told him I had made up my mind to be a mechanic.

'What, sir!' he cried; 'wear a fustian jacket and corduroy breeches; be rung to your work with a big bell; and have your dinner brought you in a basin, tied up in a cotton handkerchief; when you have the chance of being articulated to me, and inheriting my practice! Go, sir! You are unworthy of the name of Pogmore!'

My ruling passion, however, was too strong to be denied. I wouldn't work at the law, and I would work at my own contrivances. In the rear of our old-fashioned premises in the High Street of Tharborough, there was a big unused storehouse where I had my workshop. Here was a forge and a lathe, and here I chiselled, and filed, and sand-papered, and hammered all day long. I had great ideas in those days, and was determined to revolutionise all existing modes of locomotion. One of my early inventions was a universal ship-carriage, adapted equally for land or water. It was in form something between a canoe and a four-wheeled car. On trial, it was found a dead failure, and was abandoned in the mud of the river in which it perversely sunk.

For a long time after this accident I had no heart to prosecute my mechanical labours; my forge went cold, my lathe was abandoned to rust and neglect, my workshop was closed and locked.

Still my ideas ran strongly upon the means of increasing the power of man over the elements, and I determined to devise a contrivance that should put drowning out of the question, that should form a warm weather-proof covering, and at the same

time enable its possessor to take to the water at pleasure. I was not long in constructing a costume in which a man could float almost as well as without any costume at all. But it was not a complete success. It was difficult to move in it either one way or the other; and when, with a view to ascertain the effect of artificial power, I persuaded the master of one of our river-steamers to take me in tow for a sail up the Thare, I found that I had unwittingly converted myself into a gigantic kind of spinning-tackle. Round and round I went spinning at the end of the tow-rope, the water foaming in my wake as I darted along, sometimes right on the top of the waves, sometimes a foot or two beneath them. Fortunately, there are no sharks or alligators in our river to be attracted by such a bait; but I was within an ace of being drowned, when the master of the tug, perceiving my dangerous condition, stopped his way, and hauled me aboard.

This accident, however, showed me what was needed. A keel was required. Nature had not provided me with one, therefore it was necessary to make one for myself.

I will not try the patience of my readers with the details of the methods I employed to obviate this defect in my apparatus. I tried a cork keel in the first instance; but this had the effect of making me float the wrong way. I must have weight, I found, in my keel, and the extra weight entailed extra power of flotation—air-vessels, and so on. In the end, I triumphed over my difficulties; my swimming-armor was a success. I went up the Yeere with the tide one day as far as Bigborough Castle, and came home with the ebb with the very smallest exertion; and I walked back from the quay to my father's house in the High Street in triumph, wearing my new swimming-dress. Certainly I attracted considerable attention. Business was suspended for a while; and nearly two thousand of the inhabitants of Tharborough accompanied me home, completely blocking the High Street, and putting a stop to the traffic.

In my own home, I did not obtain much sympathy with my success. But the members of our

club—the Yeere and Thare Yacht Club—congratulated me warmly on my achievement; and christened my apparatus the Iktheandron.

Although our Yacht Club had originally been composed of the owners of river-craft, and had been carried on in a very humble way, the club-meeting having been held in a room over Slack's shop the tobacconist, it had grown and expanded into a regular nautical club, having sea-going craft on its books, and holding an annual regatta in the roads in front of the town. Shortly after my successful trial trip with the Iktheandron, this regatta was to come off. Out of compliment to my father, who subscribed handsomely to its funds, I was elected a committee-man. I very well remember the meeting we had before the regatta, to settle the programme for the day's entertainment. Harner was our chairman; and after we had arranged all the usual races, including a duck-hunt and tub-race for the amusement of the mob, Courthope, a tall, thin, sardonic-looking youth, who was always accompanied by a big black Newfoundland dog, suggested in a sneering manner: 'Why don't Pogmore come out with his diving-machine?'

'If you mean the Iktheandron,' I said with dignity, 'it isn't a diving-machine—it's a swimming apparatus.'

'Spinning, did you say?' queried Courthope. That was an allusion to my former *fiasco* on the Yeere which annoyed me deeply.

'I don't mean spinning,' I said with heightened colour, 'but swimming; and I'll make a bet of ten pounds with any man present that I'll take my apparatus as far as the Besom Buoy and back again; and the match shall come off on the regatta day, if you like.'

'Done with you!' said Courthope, taking out a note-book to score up the bet.

'You'll have a boat to follow you, of course,' said Harner.

'Oh, let him have a boat,' sneered Courthope; 'he'll want picking up before he's got a hundred yards.'

'I'll have no boat following me,' I said: 'the Iktheandron is safer than any boat. You'll take my word that I round the buoy?'

'Of course I'll take your word, Pogmore,' said Courthope, and there the discussion ceased. But when the bills of the regatta came out, they displayed this announcement at the bottom: 'The Iktheandron, a wonderful monster, neither fish nor man, will exhibit itself on the beach, and swim round the Besom Buoy.'

I had one or two preliminary trials on the sea in the dead of night, when nobody was about to watch me, and I found that my contrivances answered tolerably well. With a light paddle, I propelled myself canoe-fashion through the water, at the rate of four or five miles an hour. With the wind astern, I rigged up my pocket-handkerchief as a lug-sail, using my paddle as a mast, fixing it in a kind of rest on my shoulder. I couldn't sail very close to the wind, as you may imagine, I made too

much leeway for that; but, on the whole, I was well satisfied with my performances, and felt sure, if the weather were fairly good, of winning my ten pounds from Courthope, as well as earning for myself no little fame. I had only one danger to dread—lest anything should pierce my inflated india-rubber floats; in that case, I should certainly go to the bottom like lead, owing to the dead-weight of my false keels. But there was little chance of such a catastrophe. There were no sword-fish to pierce my armour; and unless one ran aground, which was not possible in the voyage I had to make, it was difficult to see how any accident could happen to the Iktheandron.

The day of our regatta was a most propitious one. The sea was calm, and yet there was a pleasant breeze. The town was crowded with excursionists, and the beach was thronged like a fair. Nobody, however, took much notice of the regatta. Guns fired, smacks and yawls sailed hither and thither, and went out of sight altogether by-and-by, while people forgot all about them. Long galleys raced some sixteen times across the course from buoy to buoy, but as one boat always led by two or three lengths, the excitement of the finish was not intense. It was quite a different matter, however, when the time arrived for the appearance of the Iktheandron. I had arranged to doff my apparel, to assume my armour in the club dressing-room; and felt a little nervous, I confess, as I took a peep from behind the blind, and saw the immense concourse of people who had collected between the door of the hotel and the beach. There was no going back now, however. Quickly and carefully, I put on my various paraphernalia; and having satisfied myself that all my arrangements were perfect, I took a final glance at myself in the long swing-glass. My appearance was not prepossessing, I am obliged to admit. Imagine a huge turtle standing on its hind-legs and carrying a paddle between his forward flippers; imagine something between the diving-man at the Polytechnic and an Esquimaux in full winter costume, and you will have some idea of my outward semblance. I well remember the excited roar that burst from the crowd as the Iktheandron appeared on the steps of the hotel for a moment and then plunged into the sea of heads.

I am afloat! I have waded gracefully through the surf, and now I have thrown myself upon my back, and am paddling rapidly out to sea, with my head to the waves. The cheers and shouts of the spectators are growing faint in the distance. I am alone upon the world of waters. I have carefully conned my course. I must keep the spire of St Peter's church and the windmill in a line, whilst I close up the monument and the look-out on the Trinity wharf. Then when these two are together, and the Serewby light-ship opens out from the spit of sand, I shall be at the Besom Buoy, or thereabouts. A feeling of joyful exhilaration possessed me. The waves were dancing in the sunshine; the sky was of a deep cerulean blue, flecked with white fleecy

clouds, like flocks of sheep straying upon the heavenly pastures. I was full of a delicious sense of freedom and power. I had timed my voyage with care; the last of the ebb was carrying me gently towards the 'Besom;' the first of the flood would float me quietly back again. I contented myself with an occasional stroke of the paddle, to keep my course; and the wind veering a point or two in my favour, I presently hoisted my sail, and skimmed joyously along.

As I cast my eyes towards the shore, I felt a certain inconvenience from the dazzling reflection of the sun in the water, as I could not make out two of the landing-marks—the monument and the look-out. But I had still the spire and wind-mill to guide me, and I should presently catch sight of the buoy itself. All of a sudden, from out of the glare of the sun's rays, I saw a glittering ripple glide forth quickly, advancing towards me. In the centre of the ripple was a black speck, that as it came nearer and nearer, assumed the appearance of a dog's head. A dog it was, sure enough; he was overhauling me rapidly, and presently I could hear his deep regular breathing as he clove his way through the waters.

At this moment the sail began to flap, the breeze died away to nothing, and I was left becalmed upon the sea. I struck my mast, and set to work to paddle with all my might, hoping to leave my unwelcome companion behind me. A few minutes' hard work convinced me that I had no chance in a trial of speed. I had better reserve my strength till it should be needed. As the dog approached, I saw that it was long Courthope's big Newfoundland; a dog that had a passion for pulling people out of the sea. He was evidently bent upon seizing me, and putting a stop to my voyage; his sharp teeth would penetrate my air-tight skin, the Iktheandron would collapse, and I should sink to the bottom like a stone.

The dog was close upon me now; he made directly for my shoulder, and rose half out of the water in his eagerness to clutch me; but a dexterous stroke of my paddle backed me out of his reach, and he missed his first spring. He quickly circled round, however, and attacked me on the other side; again I shot forward, and eluded him. The dog now seemed to appreciate my manoeuvre. Instead of approaching me sideways, he began to swim in the line of my longest axis; and as he swam faster than I could paddle, and was ready to follow any lateral deviation I could make, I foresaw that another moment would bring him upon me. Indeed, I already heard his hoarse breath close to my ear, and I aimed a wild blow with my paddle in the direction of the sound. The dog eluded the blow, and seized the end of the paddle in his mouth. The effort overcame my equilibrium; I was obliged to let go the paddle, and rolled over and over, but righted at last, and, to my joy, I saw that the dog was swimming off with the paddle. He would take it to the shore, no doubt, and although I should be embarrassed by its loss, I could steer myself pretty well by my hands. But I was speedily undeceived as to the dog's intentions. Having swum with the paddle in his mouth to a considerable distance, far out of my reach, he abandoned it, and once more swam back to renew his attack upon me. Of the combat that ensued, only the sea-gulls were the

witness; they screamed over our heads, anticipating, perhaps, a handsome feed upon the combatants; the contest soon came to an end; it was impossible to elude the vigilance and perseverance of Neptune. In a few moments, I felt that his sharp fangs had closed upon my india-rubber skin, I heard the whistle of escaping air, I felt a great gurgling and rush of water, but somehow I didn't sink; breakers went right over me, sweeping me from stem to stern, but I didn't go down; in another moment I felt that I was high and dry upon shore, the big dog pulling and dragging me out of the reach of the waves. And there he stood over me, wagging his handsome tail, and lifting his noble crest, looking as pleased and as proud as if he had done me the greatest service in the world. But for myself, I slundered and cried aloud when I saw where I was—for we had drifted on to the Besom sands.

It is a peculiarity of these sands, which are visible only from half-ebb to the following half-flood, that whilst during the rest of the ebb they are firm and dry, and afford an excellent footing; no sooner does the flood-tide begin to make, than the sands assume the consistency of puddle. Woe betide the unfortunate craft that gets ashore on these treacherous sands, which are neither land nor water, sea nor shore, where there is no footing and no swimming, where boats cannot live, and where the stoutest ship and bravest crew are inevitably irredeemably lost, sucked in by the viscid devouring pulp! On this slough of despair had I drifted during my contest with the dog; the sands were yet firm and dry, but the ebb had almost run out. In a few minutes, the flood would begin to make, the sand to quiver and turn to jelly.

There was only one thing to be done: to divest myself of the Iktheandron, and strike out in the costume of Adam for the shore. It was hardly possible that my strength would hold out, for I was not a strong swimmer, but that was the only chance. One of the equipments of the Iktheandron was a long sharp knife, kept in a waterproof sheath. With this I quickly cut the laces and fastenings of my armour, and in a few moments stood upon the sands, in the apparel in which I was born, ready to strike out for my life.

Neptune all this time had been watching me narrowly. He shewed unmistakably that he meant to follow me into the sea. Then I made up my mind that I would kill him. It seemed almost like murder to kill that brave intelligent dog, but I knew he would drown me if I didn't despatch him. I held my knife behind me in my right hand whilst I called the dog to me, speaking to him in a kind encouraging way. But he saw something in my eye that put him on his guard, and he would not come near me. The sand was already beginning to tremble under my feet. I felt a violent throe of fear and despair, that paralysed all my powers. The dog danced about me barking and howling, half in anger and half in sport. There in the distance gleamed the long low horizon, the white houses on the esplanade glittering in the sunshine, the sails of the windmills, the tall look-out stations shewing above them, white sails shewing afar off, the roar of the crowd like a faint whisper, the crack of the rifles in the travelling shooting-gallery, distinctly to be heard; everything full of life, and I doomed to die. I should be missed presently, and they would send a boat after me, but it would be too late. That black brute that was dancing about

me seemed to my excited nerves a veritable evil demon charged with my destruction.

A hoarse scream over my head, followed in a few seconds by a deep hollow roar; a flock of sea-birds fly screaming from the water, a great jet of foam and spray springs up into the air, another and another beyond. The artillery are firing from the battery on the north shore at a mark somewhere in the sea, and the shot has just struck the water and ricocheted away into the distance.

The sound aroused me from my apathy of despair. I followed the course of the shot with my eyes, and I discerned the object they were aiming at, a large barrel, moored a couple of hundred yards away from the sands, surmounted by a red flag. Suddenly I determined that I would strike out for their buoy. I could reach it easily enough from the sand-bank. I ran the risk of being struck by a shot; but, on the other hand, half-a-dozen glasses were no doubt watching the buoy from the battery, and if I could once reach it, and wave the red flag, there would be no doubt that I should be seen, and rescued. But there was the horrible dog; well, perhaps for a hundred yards, I could swim as fast as he. Without a second thought, I rushed through the breakers, and struck vigorously out for the buoy. I heard the excited bark of the dog as he followed me into the sea, but I fancy that he lost sight of me for a moment in the surf; at all events, I got a good start of him, and reached the floating barrel before he could overtake me. I had just put my hand upon it, my face turned towards the shore, when a white light flashed in my eyes, and I heard the scream of an approaching shot, different in sound from the last, not so loud or vehement, but with a puff, puff, puff, something like the roar of an express train. The dog was upon me now, and trying to clamber on my shoulders. I heard a loud roar over my head, a whistle and whirl of innumerable iron fragments, the sea round about was churned into a caldron of foam: a shell had burst over my head, and I hardly knew if I were alive or dead. But when the noise and tumult ceased, I looked around and found myself unhurt; and my enemy had disappeared. His black body was to be seen rolling over in the waves, a track of blood crimsoning their sides; he had been hit, and I had been spared.

How I supported myself on the buoy and signalled frantically with the red flag; how a boat put out from under the fort, and picked me up, and how I was sent home in a fly, wrapped up in a soldier's great-coat, and what my father said and my mother said, I haven't time to relate. Courthope was very savage about his dog, and indeed I felt sorry myself for the poor animal, whose only fault was excess of zeal. I was disposed at first to accuse Courthope of having sent the dog after me, but he completely vindicated himself from the suspicion. The dog must have kept his eyes upon me from the moment I quitted the club-room, and have followed me into the water unseen.

A fishing-smack picked up the remains of the Iktheandron, much battered by the waves, and brought it to my father's office, claiming salvage upon it. He sent them off in a great rage; upon which the boatmen proceeded to exhibit it on the beach as the skin of a wonderful sea-monster, at a charge of a penny a head; and I believe they made a good deal of money out of it.

For myself, the perils of my experimental voyage

effectually discouraged me from any attempts to resuscitate the Iktheandron. I have taken my place at last in my father's office; and I fear that I shall have no more adventures to record, even if you were disposed to listen to them.

THE EXILES OF ALSACE.

A young gentleman of Scottish parentage, Mr G. S. Stevenson, born in Geneva, and with strong French proclivities, has in a spirit of generosity written a small volume as 'a free-will offering' on behalf of those numerous and very unhappy exiles from Alsace and Lorraine, who preferred to emigrate and endure poverty rather than accept the option of remaining subjects of the German Empire.* The book is well meant; and when touching on the woes experienced by the great body of exiles on leaving their old homes, 1st October 1872, the writer is genial and pathetic. While properly abstaining from political controversy, he obviously gives the weight of his sympathy to the French, and does not conceal his belief that the Germans have done not only a grievous wrong, but committed what will eventually prove to be a serious blunder. Perhaps so. It would have been more judicious, however, in our author to have gone a little deeper into history than the pages of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, before he pronounced an absolute opinion on the subject. He seems scarcely to be aware that the exiles so mourned over are for the most part of German origin, being descendants of persons who for generations bitterly denounced their absorption by the French. As scarcely any historical fact has been more mystified than this, we shall endeavour to clear it up, for the sake of the Metzgers, Alsacers, Lorrainers, and other unfortunate transferees—not doubting that what we have to say will somehow or other reach them.

We begin by calling to mind that for several centuries, the French, high and low, but statesmen in particular, have fondly cherished the notion, that the natural and proper boundary of France on the north-east is the Rhine from its mouth to its sources. It is vain to deny this fact; so ingrafted is it in the national sentiment as to have become an article of education. We may agree with the French that the Rhine would, undoubtedly, be a well-defined boundary, rounding things very nicely off in that quarter. But then comes in the sobering reflection, that a nation, any more than an individual, cannot always get what it likes. A country must just put up with what frontier the events of history have assigned, and in calm submission make the best of it. Circumstances of old date—as old as the partition of Charlemagne's empire—had fixed the boundary of the country we now call France, considerably back from the Rhine, and there the matter should have rested, but it did not.

Fretting under the notion that the Rhine should be the frontier, and not particular as to the means

* *Alsace and Lorraine, Past, Present, and Future. Sold for the Benefit of the Emigrants of Alsace and Lorraine.* Hardwicke, London.

for securing the intermediate strip of territory, the French, about three hundred and twenty years ago, began as a bold stroke of policy to take possession of Metz, and the territory connected with it. The incident is as curious as it is discreditable. A mean advantage was taken of the war which broke out between the Emperor Charles V. and his Protestant subjects in North Germany. Although, at the time, the Protestants of France were persecuted to the death, the French king, Henry II. (son of François Premier), with furtively ambitious designs, offered to defend the Protestants of Germany against their own emperor; and entered into an alliance, in 1551, with Maurice of Saxony and other princes, undertaking to send an army to their aid. As bases of operations, it was agreed that he might take temporary military possession of Toul, Verdun, and Metz, three bishoprics each with a portion of territory lying within the duchy of Lorraine, but held as distinct fiefs of the German Empire—such, in fact, being fragments of Lothair's kingdom, which fell to Germany, and had in no shape been incorporated with France. It was stipulated that, in occupying these places, the French were not to interfere with their old connection with the Empire.

What followed this confidence might form the subject of a romance. The French grievously, and, to speak plainly, in a most shameful manner, abused the trust put in them. All the stipulations went for nothing. In 1552, French troops took possession of Toul and Verdun, also of Nancy, the capital of Lorraine, treating the duchy, generally, as a conquered country. Seeing this sort of treatment, Metz shut her gates, and trusted to her fortifications. To procure an entrance and secure possession, there was a resort to stratagems, which afford a startling illustration of the tricks that French nobles at that time could be guilty of, in order to gain their ends. The French commander, the Constable Montmorency, begged to be allowed to pass through the town with a few attendants, while his army made a wide circuit on its route. The too credulous custodiers of the city opened the gates, and, to their dismay, the whole French forces rushed in, and began to rule in true despotic fashion. Montmorency, finding himself opposed by a patriotic party among the magistrates, got the better of them by an act of almost unexampled treachery. Affecting to be very ill, he took to his bed, was dying, and invited those magistrates who were obnoxious to him to come to be witnesses of his will. Deceived by these false representations, they unfortunately attended the summons. When they presented themselves in a spirit of condolence at the bed-side of Montmorency, he suddenly sprang upon the senior magistrate, and stabbed him with a dagger to the heart, while the guard despatched the rest.

Thus was Metz secured for France in a way which modern Frenchmen, we should imagine, could hardly think of without shame, if made properly aware of the facts, which they usually are not. If any of them read this, it will probably be the first time they have heard of the transaction. Although Montmorency had secured Metz by a piece of downright brigandage, that important fortress was not submissively relinquished by Germany. Furious at its loss, the Emperor Charles V. proceeded to besiege it with a large army. The defence was undertaken by the Duke of Guise,

assisted by a body of French nobility. After an investment of four months, and a loss of thirty thousand men, Charles was forced to raise the siege, January 1, 1553, all his attempts at the capture of the place being effectually baffled. The seizure of the city and bishopric of Metz, as now briefly described, together with Toul and Verdun, was the first act of a series of aggressions made by France upon Germany, with the object of extending her frontier to the much-coveted Rhine.

The next haul which the French made on the left bank of the river was about a hundred years later, and was justifiable only on the principle of might making right. It took place in this wise. In the course of 1648, the 'Thirty Years' War in Germany terminated by the mutual exhaustion of the parties more immediately concerned—Roman Catholics and Protestants. After the sufferings which had been inflicted, both were disposed for peace, which was secured by the treaty of Westphalia, 24th October 1648. In their professed zeal to help the Protestant states of Germany, the French had been allowed to obtain a temporary military occupation of the stretch of country from Strasburg to Coblenz. Now that the war was over, they refused to withdraw, unless Alsace was ceded as an indemnity for the expenses to which they had been put. The German emperor, with impaired powers, could do nothing but protest; and at last it was agreed that France should have a large part of that rich territory. The important free city of Strasburg, and a number of counties and abbacies holding directly from the emperor, were specially excepted; but with Metz, which had been secured by the stratagem of Montmorency, and the large section of Alsace now resigned to them, the French established such a footing on the left bank of the Rhine as to facilitate further acquisitions.

The opportunity for a fresh acquisition occurred at the close of the wars of Louis XIV. in Germany and Flanders. While a congress proposed by that monarch was sitting at Frankfort for the settlement of disputes between France and the German Empire, a body of French troops in Alsace, in the middle of the night, 28th to 29th September 1681, stole from a neighbouring wood, and occupied the approaches to Strasburg, and soon an army of forty thousand men surrounded the city. There were no means of defence; and under the threat of being immediately stormed and pillaged, the citizens were obliged to open their gates. Strasburg was captured. This virtually decided the fate of the country. The French acquisitions were sanctioned by the Peace of Ryswick, 1697, and Alsace was henceforth a French province, with the exception of a small part at its southern extremity, which was taken from Germany at the Revolution.

We thus see that Alsace, now recovered by Germany, had not been so much as two hundred years in possession of the French. The more aged of the exiles may have talked with old men who had begun life as Germans. As regards Lorraine, it is little more than a hundred years since it was incorporated with France. It has sometimes been erroneously stated that it came to Louis XV. as the reversionary dowry of his wife, Maria Leszcynski, daughter of Stanislaus, Duke of Lorraine, who held it as a fief of Germany. Lorraine was in reality a piece of territory extorted by France from

Germany at the adjustment of terms of peace, when concluding the war in reference to Poland. It was to be merged in France on the death of Stanislaus. That event occurred in 1766, since which time only the Lorrainers have been under French rule.

There, in simple phrase, is the whole story, which is little else than a history of robberies; the wrench back which has recently taken place, reminding us that even nationalities are not exempt from the visitation of an avenging Nemesis. It may be quite true, that the inhabitants had become so accustomed to consider themselves French, that their compulsory subjection to Germany, by the treaty of Frankfort, was deemed a cruelty too great to be borne. Their ancestors, in being made Frenchmen, felt precisely the same grievance. Long did the Metzers and other communities of the territories torn from the empire by France, utter the most doleful complaints of the way they had been cheated out of their German nationality—all such complaints being of course unavailing. As an instance of the treatment they received: An appeal of the leading citizens of Metz, addressed to the imperial council at Spire, was seized by Marshall Vicilleville, governor of Metz; two of those most actively concerned in the movement were drowned, and the others compelled to beg for mercy on their knees. Frenchmen of the present day, of course, have no knowledge of such facts. They should, nevertheless, bear in mind that the recent bouleversement is only another turning of the tables, which may in a generation or two be forgotten. Prince Bismarck is not thought to be much given to irony. Some remarks he lately made in the German parliament partook of this character. In reply to several deputies from Alsace and Lorraine who complained of being forcibly incorporated with Germany, he dryly advised them to be quite at their ease, for in two hundred years the people of these districts of country would, no doubt, be delighted with the change that had taken place in their condition!

Hard case! as our young author suggests, to be subject to such a wholesale and sudden ruin of cherished feelings and habits, to the many thousands who 'were placed in the alternative to quit their interests, their business, their fields, the graves of their fathers, the homes inherited from childhood, and in which they hoped to die, or to lose the name of Frenchmen—to renounce their country and their flag. Who can tell us what bitter tears it cost to this unoffending and hitherto happy population, the necessity of making such sacrifices, and coming to a great decision.' Hard case, truly; and how many hard cases of the same sort, during the last hundred years, have occurred in Continental Europe from Finland to the shores of the Mediterranean. In 1860, Savoy and Nice were ceded to France, abstracting so much territory from Italy, the inhabitants being offered the same kind of option that was graciously presented in the case of Alsace and Lorraine. Who has ever made any moan for this high-handed proceeding? Doubtless, there is something peculiarly hard in Alsace and Lorraine being taken possession of in self-defence by Germany, but such is the fortune of an unprovoked war, which leaves France minus the provinces which in former ages it appropriated to serve its own ambitious purposes. Mr Stevenson speaks of this lost land becoming through sheer

discontent what Venice was to Austria—a regular thorn in the side of Germany. Who can tell how this may be? In the circumstances, we may pity France, but unquestionably the nation, in a most heedless and wrongful manner, brought the loss of territory on itself. W. C.

HISSING.

HISSING, according to Milton, had the very worst of beginnings. It was first heard in Pandemonium. When Satan returned to his comrades in guilt after his victory over our first parents, and related his terrible achievement:

Awhile he stood, expecting
Their universal shout and high applause
To fill his ear; when, contrary, he hears
On all sides, from innumerable tongues,
A dismal universal hiss, the sound
Of public scorn.

An assembly of churchmen ought, no doubt, to be the exact reverse of an assembly of demons. That there is, however, some expectation of a certain amount of hissing in ecclesiastical gatherings may be inferred from the precautionary charge with which Archbishop Trench opened the Dublin Church Congress in 1868. 'Hissing,' remarked that scholarly prelate, 'is not a human utterance: it is objectionable, because it not only expresses dissent from the speech, but dislike to the speaker.' He begged the members of the Congress to say 'No, no!' with all the fervour they could command, and not to hiss, whenever they felt compelled to give an audible expression to their dissent. The poet who attributes the first hiss to the devils, has said that 'new presbyter is but old priest writ large.' During the sitting of the Scottish Free Church Assembly in June 1873, some of the members indulged themselves so freely in hissing the speeches of those with whom they disagreed, that Dr Duff, the Moderator, told them they reminded him of Milton's hissing devils. The parallel was not exact, for Milton's devils were compelled to hiss against their will, while those gentlemen hissed, no doubt, out of hearty free will.

There has been some controversy as to the most ancient method of manifesting disapproval in public assemblies. Distinction must, however, be made between organised state assemblies and assemblies fortuitously gathered, such as mobs or theatre audiences. In the former, hissing has undoubtedly always been considered as more or less of a disorder; it has never been recognised as the dignified or legitimate way of showing disagreement. Cicero often alludes to hissing (*sibilus*) as the form of salutation with which the Roman populace greeted those whom they disliked in the places of public concourse; they poured it forth equally upon the politicians and the entertainers who had lost their favour. Cælius, in one of his letters to Cicero, included amongst the Epistles of the latter, after speaking of the hissing of the vulgar, goes on to say that it is remarkable that Hortensius reached his great age without once incurring the shame of being hissed; or as it stands literally in the Latin: 'Hortensius arrived at old age untouched by a hiss.' Cicero asserts that the actor was hissed off (*exsibilatur*) by the keenly critical

populace if he pronounced a verse one syllable too long or too short. Our English actors have an easy and indulgent audience in the galleries of our theatres; but if the English language is ever taught to English children of the poorer classes in the national schools (as German is taught amongst the dialect-speaking German races), the 'gods' will perhaps become more intolerant. It seems, from a passage in Tacitus, that mercenary hisses could be hired for the purpose of theatrical disapproval by a playwright envious at a rival's success, or galled at his own failures. Unpopular characters seem to have been hissed wherever they shewed themselves. Cicero demands tauntingly of one of his antagonists: 'Why dost thou not shew thyself to the people at the games? Fearest thou to be hissed?' The miser in Horace's Satires consoles himself, that although the people hiss him out of doors, he applauds himself at home.

Hissing comes so easily to the natural man when he wants to express dissent, that it must certainly have tried to legitimatise itself again and again in state assemblies; but it has been decided that groaning and coughing accord better with the dignity of such meetings. Formal divisions were not taken in the primitive periods of deliberative assemblies: the mind of the majority was discovered by simpler and quicker processes. Our Teutonic ancestors, according to Tacitus in his *Germania*, expressed their affirmative vote by the brandishing of their spears or rattling of their weapons: this, he says, was their most complimentary form of assent and approbation. They voted their 'Nay' by uttering a growling noise; 'if sentiments displeased them, they rejected them with murmurs.' The *strepitus*, whatever it be, was certainly in a lower and less insolent and irritating tone than the hiss. Strabo tells us there was an officer (a moderator?) in the old Gaulish assemblies whose business it was to put down all interruption: at the third summons he cut off a piece of the offender's tartaan with his sword. We do not know that we may accuse James I. of bringing hissing along with his other followers from Scotland into England, but it was certainly attempted in his first English parliament in 1604. Mr Hext 'moved against hissing, to the interruption and hindrance of the speech of any man in the House, taking occasion from an abuse of that kind offered on Sunday before: a thing, he said, derogating from the dignity, not becoming the gravity, and abusing the honour and privilege of the House.' In Thomas Burton's diary of the Cromwellian parliaments there are complaints of 'humming'; but it is not said whether the hum was directed against the speakers, or whether it was merely irritating small-talk in an undertone carried on by those who were determined not to listen.

The theatre is of course the classical and historical home of hissing. I imagine that any one with sufficient acquaintance with the details of dramatic history and biography might compile a big book on Hissing in the Theatre. It has domesticated itself there; in other places it has only lodged: if it is to be finally dislodged from other places, it will still, I suppose, assert a prescriptive title to be heard there. Theatre-hissing is not only noticed by the great dramatists of all periods of our literature, but I find it brought in to point a moral by one of our great English preachers, who has most absurdly and uncritically been taken for a

Puritan, Thomas Adams. In a sermon published in 1614, under the title *The Sinner's Passing Bell*, he says: 'The player that misacts an inferior and unnoted part, carries it away without censure; but if he shall play some emperor or part of observation unworthily, the spectators are ready to hiss him off.' Plays, however, are hissed as well as players, and the French have an untranslatable adjective which they apply to both. Hissing began in the theatres, say the French Encyclopædists, as soon as there were bad poets and bad actors impudent enough and ignorant enough to expose themselves to the criticism of a great assembled world. The French call such actors and the works of such poets *sifflable* (hiss-able); they speak of a 'comédie sifflable,' an 'acteur sifflable.' I have only heard of one attempt to dislodge hissing from its home in the theatre, or rather to regulate its hour; readers who are better acquainted with theatrical history may possibly know of others. In December 1819, the police of Copenhagen issued the following curious ordinance: 'After this present notice, the public shall not testify their dissatisfaction at the conclusion of a piece at the theatre until ten minutes after the fall of the curtain. At the expiration of these ten minutes, a signal will be given by three beats on a great drum, and all those who after that shall hiss, or give any other mark of disapprobation, will be arrested as disturbers of the public peace. A French newspaper of the same year (from which this ordinance is translated) says that it was infringed the very first night it was in force, and that arrests were made accordingly. The fact that hissing is reckoned legitimate at the theatres, has led men to choose them as the places for expressing their public dislikes in times of great excitement. Shakspeare's Cardinal Wolsey was hissed at the time of the papal aggression, but the hiss was not meant for the actor, but for Cardinal Wiseman. Hisses are directed at unpopular persons who come as spectators, and not as actors. Sir William Knighton says that George IV. always entered the theatre with an excessive dread of being saluted with this mark of public disapprobation. If he heard one single hiss, although it were immediately drowned in general and tumultuous applause, he went home wretched, and would lie awake all night thinking of that one ugly note, and not of the thousand agreeable notes. Sometimes it has not been one visitor, but a whole party of visitors who have had the hisses of the spectators directed upon them. In one of the periodical 'essays,' poor imitations of the *Tattler* and *Spectator*, which appeared in such numbers throughout the eighteenth century (the *Prater*, 1756, re-published as a book in 1757), we are told that the conduct of ladies in the theatres was often so unbecoming, that the audience hissed them into silence. It seems that they talked and laughed so loudly as to render the actors inaudible.

I imagine that a chapter might be made upon the repartees of the victims of hissing. To say that the hissed have often given back as good as they got, would be to say that they merely shewed fight; but the fact is that they have very frequently, like Orator Hunt, won an unmistakable victory. On one occasion there were only seven persons in the theatre at Weimar; the seven, however, considered themselves to form a sufficient court of criticism, and taking offence at the bad

acting of one performer, they hissed him energetically; the manager thereupon brought his whole company upon the stage, and out-hissed the visitors. Mr H. C. Robinson tells us that he was present at Covent Garden Theatre with Charles and Mary Lamb in December 1808, when Lamb's *Mr H*— was performed for the first time. The absurdity of the piece turns upon the hero being ashamed of his name, which is only revealed at the end as 'Hog-flesh.' 'The prologue was very well received,' says Mr Robinson, 'indeed, it could not fail, being one of the very best in our language. But on the disclosure of the name, the squeamishness of the vulgar taste in the pit shewed itself by hisses; and I recollect that Lamb joined, and was probably the loudest hisser in the house.' Rossini, at the first performance of his famous *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, took the very opposite course; when every one was hissing, he turned round and energetically applauded. He felt certain of the triumphant future of the opera, and from his earliest youth was unmoved by the first judgment of the general public.

BELGIAN HUSBANDRY.

THE possibility of making a decent living for a family out of a farm depends in large degree on soil and climate. A small farm of a few acres in England, and more especially in Scotland, means semi-starvation. We have seen several instances in which the thing has been tried, and lamentably failed. A case occurred not long since within our personal observation, in which a land proprietor, by way of experiment, let a piece of ground, extending to about eight acres, with a house upon it, for a merely nominal rent. The land was good, though a little rough, and the tenant set stoutly to work upon it. In two years, he gave it up as hopeless. Another person made the attempt, and he also, in the same length of time, begged to be released of his lease, which was taken off his hands. The experiment was then very properly given up, and the land absorbed into a larger holding.

It is quite a different matter trying to farm on a small scale in the Bay of Naples, or in Belgium. There the farming is in reality a kind of gardening. Soil and climate, as well as old engrafted habits, conspire to make it practicable for a man, wife, and children to extort a living from a mere patch of ground. It is a pity that theorists who talk confidently about land distribution do not, from any personal knowledge, tell us how it is to be satisfactorily accomplished. We say distinctly that the cultivation of lands in Great Britain will not prove advantageous unless on a considerable scale, with professional knowledge, and capital to hire labourers, to buy and keep horses, to purchase artificial manures, and lie out of returns in the ordinary course of business.

As regards that garden of northern Europe, the more fertile part of Belgium, the appearance of things there is certainly very fascinating—the neat whitewashed dwelling and outhouses, the trim miniature fields, the orchards in blossom, the industrious and simple habits of the people, the

spires of village churches peeping out among the trees, all give one notions of the golden age, 'when every rood of ground maintained its man.' The very fertility, however, which produces this result is for the most part not natural. It is the effect of centuries of diligent application with the spade or plough, constant drugging with manure, and tact in changing the crops. But there is more than this. It is a result of intensely economical habits, of which we can hardly say there is any parallel in England.

Without enumerating all the plants to which the Belgian farmer gives his care, the colza, poppy, hop, flax, hemp, chicory, wheat, rye, buckwheat, and haricot beans may be named; and as root-crops or forage, turnips, beetroot, cabbages, peas, vetches, oats, and the common and scarlet clover. This variety gives to the country a very pleasing aspect; there are no large fields lying bare, as with us, waiting for the wheat, but they rather appear like a garden, where are large beds of flowers of every hue. In early spring, the scarlet clover alternates with the bright yellow colza, then the beautiful blue flax; the little white stars of the buckwheat contrast with the gaudy purple poppy, and the large tobacco-leaves, whose intense green recalls the vegetation of the tropics. Without these plants, the owner never could pay either for the manure he puts in or his high rent, as wheat grows very poorly. They require much labour, and the soil has no repose; the labourer is always digging with the spade, turning over the soil, hoeing, weeding, or harvesting.

English and Scotch farmers might take a lesson from the Belgian agriculturists in their prodigious care of manure—no wasteful exhalation, no neglect of the liquids which enrich the soil. We might almost say that the Belgian farmer is a reverential worshipper of manure. It is his idol, his treasury. In the first place, there is the manure produced in the cattle-sheds. No cow is allowed to go about in the open air. All stay within doors, and liquids which we too often see running to waste, are carefully conducted into covered tanks. Neither is the solid part allowed to be in the open air; it is covered from sun and rain, which destroy the ammoniacal salts, and trodden by three or four young cattle during the winter. In addition, the farmer collects from his ditches and streams aquatic plants, which he mixes with the manure, or uses them at once to hasten the growth of the potato. He sends to a distance for the mud dredged from canals, and lime; in the nearest town he buys the refuse from tanneries and manufactories, animal black, cinders, street-sweepings, crushed bones, and the refuse of flax and colza. His younger children are out at dawn with a little cart, gathering up from the roads and fields all that, according to agricultural chemistry, can restore to the land what has been drawn from it. Peru sends its guano; and the farmer is seen in spring, sack in hand, sowing the precious powder on the barren portions of his land; and the flinty soil swallows it all with such promptitude, that it must be manured twice or three times a year. In no country is such high-farming carried on, and it would be ruinous without

the rich return of these plants, and the accessory crops which are gathered after the principal ones.

In Eastern Flanders, of a hundred acres of land, seventy-two are sown with cereals and plants used in manufactures; twenty-eight with roots and forage; but to this must be added thirty-one acres of after-crop, which gives sixty-nine as affording excellent food for cattle, superior to common meadows, and which explains how poor land can pay a rent of five pounds an acre. The second sowing consists of turnips and *spargula* after colza, flax, and early potatoes; and the carrot, which is sown in spring with the preceding crops, and carefully hoed after they have been taken away. The clovers having occupied the ground during winter, leave it clear for the April sowing; and the giant cabbage develops during the cold season, making a stem six feet high, and giving abundant and excellent leaves for milch cows. Culture thus pushed to the extreme, necessarily requires some capital, and it is reckoned that, through a system of rigorous parsimony and saving, double the sum per acre is used in Belgium to that employed in England, and two-thirds more in the best farms. In this way the most dense population in Europe can subsist on a soil so little favoured by nature.

Here it will be observed that the small farmers of Belgium, with their ten to fifty acres, place their reliance on a variety of crops, such as we could not profitably introduce into England. We might say the same thing of small farming in Lombardy. There the land bears three crops at once—mulberry trees, grown for the sake of their leaves as food for silkworms; wheat beneath the trees; and vines in the hollows of the ridges. In the south of France we see the same diversity; in some places olive trees, for the oil they produce, taking the place of the mulberry. In such parts, the country is like a garden; and with little winter, there is something growing all the year round.

Turning to one of the most fertile parts of Belgium, all, as has been said, is charming—every road is bordered with trees; not a rise in the ground is seen; all is calm, uniform, and presents an image of quiet comfort and peace. Each house is detached, and surrounded with large apple-orchards, hedged in by box, holly, or hawthorn, where the cows are brought to feed every morning and evening. It is of one story only, and thatched, containing four rooms; the first for meals, the second for the dairy and preparing the food for cattle, the others for sleeping-rooms. The old-fashioned oak furniture is a model of brightness; tin and copper utensils shine on the walls, which are whitewashed. The garden is gay with wallflowers, dahlias, and hydrangeas, and the florists' flowers which are to be shewn at Ghent.

Outside, everything is in its place; nothing spoils the greensward; the ditch and manure-heap are banished; the latter is always under the roof of the stable or cow-shed. In this stand five or six large cows, the constant care of the farmer's wife, who gives them abundance of green meat in summer, with straw, hay, and a kind of warm soup, mixed with carrots, turnips, or rye, in winter. Thanks to this nourishment, and the constant rest they enjoy, the animals give from fifteen to twenty-five quarts of milk daily. The tools are simple; but of first-rate construction; the plough is light, drawn by one horse, and works with ease, rapidity, and regularity. The harrows are of various kinds, triangu-

lar, rectangular, or a parallelogram; but the special tool with which the Fleming has fertilised sands, dried up marshes, and forced back the sea, is the spade. The proverb on the banks of the Scheldt is: 'The spade is a gold mine to the peasant;' and different kinds are made for light or heavy soil.

The fields are mostly square, and rarely contain more than an acre; the ground is curved symmetrically, the centre being the highest, so that the water drains down equally in all directions. Round the field, and a foot lower, extends a strip of grass, three or four yards wide; still lower, a hedge of elders is planted, which is cut every seven years; and, finally, the plot is surrounded by a ditch, bordered with trees of larger growth. Thus, each piece furnishes rich grass, firewood every seven years, and timber for building every thirty years. The plough is generally used; but every seven years the subsoil is turned to the top by the spade, and thus it acquires a depth unknown to all but the best gardens; the principal object being to produce flax and butter, not cereals. The best farmers never sell their corn, but allow their cattle to consume it.

Unhappily, the farm-labourer there, as elsewhere, does not enjoy much comfort; working harder than most men, he is the worst fed. Rye-bread, potatoes, beans, buttermilk, without meat or bacon, is the usual fare, chicory the constant drink; beer is reserved for Sundays and fair-days. His wages vary from tenpence to a shilling, and he could never live upon it did not all the members of his family work without ceasing. When the day's work is ended, often by moonlight, the father cultivates his small field; his wife and daughters take up the poorly paid lace-work, instead of the old spinning-wheel, which steam has superseded; and his sons, when their field-work is done, bring up rabbits for the London market. Their little hands pick up every tuft of herbage on the roadside, and open up a large trade of exportation not to be despised. From Ostend alone there come to us one million two hundred thousand rabbits every year; these are skinned and cleaned in Belgium, where the skin is used for the making of hats. Yet, though their life is so hard, the towns do not attract the rural population. Habit and family traditions bind them to the plough; whilst every nine years, at the renewal of their lease, the raising of the rent fills them with anxiety, and poisons their existence. It makes them distrust all those who are making inquiry on the state of agriculture, and dissimulate as to the fertility of their land, and the produce they obtain from it.

Western Flanders is crossed by a strip of land which is particularly difficult of cultivation; until lately it was scarcely inhabited, and covered with low brushwood and marshy heath. The reindeer moss enveloped the trees with a layer as of white ashes; abundance of ferns and moss grew, and the sickly appearance of other plants gave the country a sterile appearance. But by means of the pine-tree this land has also become valuable. About thirty thousand young trees are planted on an acre; at the end of seven years, these are thinned, and sold for firewood; this is repeated every two years, until the trees are twenty years old, when they begin to cut them into poles for the hop; at twenty-five years, they produce props for mines; at thirty, wood for building; and at forty, the acre will still

have a thousand trees, worth three or four shillings each, the whole paying very fairly for the expenses.

A few families settle on the spot to carry on the work; they take a lease of a corner of land at a very low rent, and husband and wife set to work, and build a cabin which they can call their own. The next savings are spent on a goat and a few rabbits, then they bring up a calf on the grass which grows in the wood; when at last they possess a cow, they are saved from poverty. The milk is made into butter; the manure enriches their land; a little capital accumulates, and in a few years the labourer becomes a small farmer; by degrees the small population increases, the land is conquered by cultivation, the owner has spent little beside the wages. The labourer is assured of his plot for thirty years, and willingly spends his time upon it. Here, doubtless, under adverse circumstances, a living is made by a family; but what kind of living? Not what any ordinary English artisan, realising the comforts procurable by a wage of a pound to thirty shillings a week, would be inclined to put up with.

The two products which grow the best on poor land are rye and potatoes, and they form the food of most of the rural classes in Belgium. It has been remarked that the Germanic races have a predilection for rye, and it bears a better crop than wheat, whilst the straw is much used for roofing the cabins. Barley gives also a larger return than in England; and potatoes, though so uncertain, owing to the disease, are the favourite food of the Flemings; buckwheat is also a precious plant, because it requires little tillage; and when the potatoes fail at the end of July, it can be immediately sown, and coming up as the leaves die, stifles the weeds, and gives a good second crop. Flax is more cultivated than ever, as France and England buy all the finest quality ready spun. Each farmer also grows the tobacco for his own use; whilst near Commines and Wervicq it is cultivated on a large scale, and acquires a powerful flavour, much appreciated in America.

The hop is another variety of culture of which Belgium may be proud; the vine of the north hangs its beautiful dark-green verdure around the poles, but it only gives its perfumed cones in return for much money and continual labour. The land must be rich and provided with fir-poles, three thousand to the acre; as it grows, the stems have to be tied, and liquid manure given to those plants which show yellow leaves; finally, at the time of harvest, numbers of work-people have to be gathered together for the picking. But whilst in England the whole of the ground is sacrificed to the hop, there are in Belgium the most splendid crops of wheat and beetroot growing between. Chicory, like the hop, is a very expensive article of culture; but it gives a rich return, estimated at forty pounds an acre. The produce of colza is also very valuable.

It will be seen that few sheep are fed in a country where there is so little pasture; horses of great strength, and milch cows which give much butter, and can be fed in the stable, are considered most advantageous, and statistics shew that more of these animals are fed on the acre than in any other country. It is to be remarked that the Flemish farmer has compensated for all the disadvantages of his soil and climate by a simple means within the reach of all—that of restoring to the land what it gives to the wants of man; the too much neglected

secret of agricultural chemistry. Belgium, in short, offers a pleasant spectacle of rural industry, but, from the circumstances mentioned, we do not believe that the same thing could be realised in the British Islands.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER XVI.—MISS LINCH.

THE *fracas*, as the Hilton newspapers termed it, between John Milbank and Dennis Blake was settled out of court, as Mr Linch had foretold it would be; but that did not curb the gossips' tongues, which made very free with Maggie's name. She formed for some days the chief topic of conversation at the *Sans Souci* club, not only in the card and billiard rooms, but, I am sorry to say, among the more grave and reverend seigniors, who dismissed the circumstances of the case 'with a world of coughing and noise,' engendered mostly by suppressed significance. The theories on the matter were very various—some even contending that Blake was Maggie's champion against the aspersions of Milbank; but almost all opinions were unfavourable to John. A man who could brick up a cellar with good wine in it, neither drinking it himself, nor permitting others to drink it, was not likely to receive much quarter in genial male society. Nor did he fare much better with the ladies; their keener instinct directed them nearer to the truth, but they did not spare him the more on that account; and, of course, they were capable of 'saying things' from which the masculine mind shrank appalled. Of all this, Herbert Thorne and his daughter knew nothing for many days; his condition kept him within doors, and Maggie staid at home to nurse him. They had read the account of the rencontre with Dennis in the paper, and afterwards, that the matter had been compromised, but they had heard nothing more; and they could not understand why John did not look in as usual.

The engraver endeavoured to explain it on the grounds of delicacy: this unfortunate quarrel had arisen on Maggie's behalf, and John might well conceive that his appearance would be painful to her; perhaps he even blamed himself for his part in it; though the printed accounts shewed he had acted under great provocation. Blake, drunk and dangerous, had insulted him in the street, and being mildly put aside by that quite resolute arm of his, had spoken daggers about Poulter's Alley, whereupon John had knocked him down, just once—and it must be confessed that the once had been enough. Denny had fallen to pieces beneath that 'shot from the shoulder' like a box of matches; it seemed as though John had been husbanding his strength, throughout his inoffensive lifetime, to deal that terrible blow.

It was a shocking catastrophe, no doubt, but Maggie secretly admired John for his part in it more than she had done for all his passive virtues, and this she would have done even had the girl he had thus championed been dead Alice Grey. Seeing it was herself, she experienced also a shock of tender gratitude. Certainly, as even her father said, it would be embarrassing for her to meet John; but she longed to thank him for his advocacy—though she blamed its haste and violence—and since she must see him sooner or later, it seemed foolish

in him, though quite in accordance with his shy retiring ways, to keep aloof. As days, however, went on, and weeks, without his coming, she began to speculate whether he would come at all; and also to consider whether the mere fear of her displeasure was not the cause of his absence; and though her father forbore to discuss the matter with her, she saw, by the failure of his spirits, that he missed John's visits exceedingly, and, like herself, had begun to conclude that there would be no renewal of them. The improvement in his physical health was become much less marked, though his enforced idleness was borne with his usual patience. One afternoon there was a ring at the door-bell which startled them both, since visitors of any sort were very rare with them now.

'Thank Heaven, there is John at last,' cried the engraver.

Maggie did not reply, for she could not be so sure of John's ring as she had been of Richard's; and besides, now that the moment had come for the interview so long delayed, she half wished that it might yet be postponed: her pale cheeks flushed, and her heart beat high, as she listened for that slow, firm footfall on the stairs which had in itself something of the owner's character. Poor Richard used to bound up them three steps at a time.

It was, therefore, with almost a sense of relief that she heard a female voice in conference with the servant below, and her father exclaim peevishly: 'Why, it is that stupid, tedious woman, Martha Linch, after all.'

Martha Linch was a stupid, tedious woman, with a perennial flow of small-talk, that would have worn away the heart of any husband, though it were made of stone; but the maxim, that there is 'not stuff enough in a fool to make a good man,' does not somehow apply to woman. Miss Linch was an eminently good creature, and would have made the lawyer's home a happy one, had he only been deaf; as it was, he was away from it a good deal, on week-days working at the law; on Sunday, preaching the gospel—being, as Mr Roberts said, 'a professing Christian, but a practising attorney'; and not being Martha's husband, he passed the hours of the night in silence, which recruited him. It was only her tongue—at once a speaker and an 'unruly member'—that was in fault with her: her hand was ever ready to help her fellow-creatures, to smooth the pillow, and soothe the pain of the humblest. When the engraver had been taken ill, she had volunteered to assist Maggie in tending him, an offer which was declined with thanks, but peremptorily; but the rejection had not offended her. Nothing offended Martha Linch, except wickedness and vice, and such things as offend Heaven. But she never intruded where she was not welcome, and she knew that the engraver did not enjoy her society, so her visits in Mitchell Street were like those of angels. Once in six months, or so, this 'old belle with her clapper,' as coarse Matthew Thurle had been wont to term her, was wont to call on the Thornes, and the present was one of her state visits.

Upon this occasion, the clapper seemed to be somewhat 'muffled,' nor had her words and manners the bird-like vivacity for which they were generally distinguished, as she flew from twig to twig of small-talk with untiring wing. Perhaps the

melancholy condition of the engraver restrained her; she saw at once that he was not yet able to be at work again, and her kind eyes glistened as they fell upon his disused tools. After a few words of genuine condolence with him, she addressed herself confidentially to Maggie.

'He is better though, is he not, dear?' whispered she; 'only, while the grass is growing, the steel starves, and it is so sad to be out of work. My dear brother has told me you seemed getting on quite comfortably, or else I should have called, of course; you would have sent to me, if you had wanted any help, I hope. Well, that shews the advantage of putting by against a rainy day. I am sure it does you both credit. To have managed to rub on, and hold your heads up, without borrowing, that is most satisfactory after all; though, between friends, what is a little money advanced. Obligation, indeed! That's rubbish.'

Maggie was growing very hot and uncomfortable, under these well-meant phrases, every one of which had a barb for her; when her father came to the rescue, by inquiring after John Milbank. Miss Linch immediately assumed an air of gloomy reserve, ill fitting, as a Spanish cloak thrown over a Highlander. 'He is tolerably well, I believe,' said she significantly; 'as well as can be expected, quite.'

'My good woman, what do you mean?' inquired the engraver, always impatient of poor Martha. 'That is a phrase I have never before heard applied to a person of the male sex.'

'Well, he's worried and troubled, of course. It was most injudicious of him to do what he did; and you never can stop people's tongues by knocking them down ever so often in the street; quite the contrary. My dear brother compares him to Cadmus, a gentleman about whom you probably know more than I. Every tooth that he knocked out of Mr Blake has sprung up an armed man against him.'

'I understand the metaphor,' observed the engraver dryly; 'but what I can not understand is, how a man like John Milbank can be put out of sorts by malicious tittle-tattle. Why should he shut himself up like a hermit, because fools speak ill of him?'

'He was never much of a man for going out into society,' suggested Miss Linch; 'and I believe he goes down to the office, and so on, much as usual.'

'He seems to have quite deserted his old friends, however,' remarked the engraver with irritation; 'and you may tell him that I said so, if you please.'

'O father!' interposed Maggie pleadingly.

'Well, really, you see it is such a very delicate matter. It is nobody's fault except the scandal-mongers, I know; but I don't quite see how John is to come here as usual; not on his own account, of course, Mr Thorne—in a man's case, nothing signifies—but out of delicacy to somebody else; and Miss Linch looked significantly at Maggie.

'What! because a drunken reprobate tells a vile story of an honest girl—a story, too, that turns out on investigation vastly to her credit—she is supposed, forsooth, to be unable to endure the sight of the man that has taken up the cudgels for her! Why, if he has any sense, he must be sure that a girl of spirit'—

'I entreat you to be silent, father!' exclaimed

Maggie earnestly. 'You are distressing me beyond all measure. It is plain enough that Miss Linch is aware of some other reason—and probably a good one—why John Milbank does not visit us. It seems to me that you would be greatly wanting in self-respect to send him any such message as you proposed a while ago.'

'Well, indeed, Mr Thorne, I couldn't take it,' observed Miss Linch demurely. 'I don't think it would be consistent with propriety to do so; I don't, indeed. It could only add to his unhappiness, and a more unhappy man than John, even as it is, I do not know. If I was wicked enough to believe in luck, I should say he was born without it. First to be half-ruined by his brother, and then to be blamed because his brother ran away; though nobody, I'm sure, laments his absence—his loss, one might almost call it, since, I suppose, he will never turn up again—more than John himself does. The difference in him, even then, as you must have seen with your own eyes, was sad enough: not a smile for anybody, and the colour all gone out of his cheeks, as from a cheap print in the wash; and now, because he has taken upon himself to chastise a wicked scoundrel for speaking ill of his brother's betrothed wife—though I am sure I am as glad *that* never came off, as any of her friends—to be accused of wanting to curry favour with her upon his own account; I say, he seems to me to be very hardly used indeed. Of course, it is an additional misfortune to be deprived of the society of such old friends as you and Maggie; but still, under the circumstances, how can he come? I think you must see that, Mr Thorne, yourself?'

'I do see it,' answered the engraver gravely. 'The fact is, Miss Linch, that Maggie and I have lived of late in such seclusion that we have not heard this gossip.'

'Dear me, I hope I have not been inconsiderate!' exclaimed Miss Linch in a flutter. 'I am the last person in the world to talk, myself, but I really thought that everybody was aware of what was said of John. It is perfectly shameful, in my opinion, and when the poor fellow is already half broken-hearted, and worn to a thread, for Richard's sake. I am sure such a man has need to have his reward in the next world.—Of course, it is not your fault, Miss Maggie, so you needn't take on about it' (Miss Maggie's 'taking on' was simply being perfectly silent; in Miss Linch's eyes, however, a circumstance of much significance); 'for, as I always say, not a syllable of encouragement has John Milbank, to my knowledge, ever had from you. It was only yesterday that I tried to comfort him, when he called at my dear brother's, with saying that "Whatever the world may say, John," said I, "her conscience is as clear as yours, in that matter; she would as soon have thought of marrying the Pope of Rome." But he only groaned, in a miserable, hopeless sort of way, and went slowly out of the house, like one in a dream. Mrs Morden tells me that he's always like that, more or less; and it's her opinion—though it needn't go any farther—that John's brain is getting affected from sheer moping and solitude. His health is certainly breaking up. He has had the roses planted again that poor Richard cut down in his tantrums; but I doubt myself if he will ever live to see them blow. However, it is a great pleasure to me to find you getting better, Mr Thorne; and I hope you will soon

be able to come with Maggie, and take a dish of tea with us. A little change of scene will do *her* good too. But I've been chatting here long enough, and you're still an invalid, I must remember, and ought not to be excited.'

Then, in a torrent of farewells and promises to look in upon Maggie, and cheer her up, whenever she should feel the need of that stimulant, Martha Linch took her leave.

Father and daughter sat in silence for some minutes after her departure. The old man was dreadfully cast down. If what their visitor had said was true, as no doubt it was, there was indeed no hope of John Milbank's visiting Mitchell Street, far less of his making suit to Maggie. That he was really devoted to her, the engraver had no doubt. With some men in the like case, such rumours would only have urged them to prosecute their addresses, and learn their fate at once; but John was so diffident of himself, and so sensitive of the opinions of others, that it might well be, in his chivalrous carefulness for Maggie's reputation, that he might even die and make no sign that he had ever loved her. There was a lackadaisicalness and want of spirit in such a course of conduct, that at one time would have aroused Herbert Thorne's contempt; but a broken man, enfeebled by disease, and burdened with debt, cannot call contempt to his assistance; such a man has only anxiety for his ally—or, rather, for his unsought companion, and well for him when it is not exchanged for mortification and disappointment. It was so exchanged now in Thorne's case. He had hoped to live to see his only daughter married to a good and thriving man; but that union was out of the question: the delicate and beautiful flower that seemed formed to adorn a home, was to be put to far other uses. If health and strength should continue to be denied him—and they seemed just now to be gone from him for ever—she was doomed to be his nurse, and drudge, and scanty bread-winner, till death should relieve her of a useless father; and then she would be quite alone, without a friend! He bent his head over the work that ever and anon he still took up, in hopes to find that the virtue that disease had stolen had returned to his right hand, and for the first time there fell a tear on the shining metal, that turned to disregarded rust.

'Father, dear, I am going out,' said Maggie presently: 'I shall be a little longer away than usual.'

'As you please, my darling—as you please,' he murmured with averted face.

It was her habit at five o'clock to leave him to visit the child in Poulter's Alley, who had been the innocent cause of all this trouble. He had never objected to her doing so; it was a protest against that ruffian scandal, and besides, he knew that it gave her comfort, and that she sorely needed it; but to-day he grudged her absence on that errand. What a curse had this Richard Milbank been to him and his; and what a legacy of woe had he left behind him! It would be hard enough for Maggie to get bread for their own mouths, and yet, for the future, it seemed she must support this fellow's unacknowledged offspring.

How complacently do we talk of the condition of the poor; yet what a burden to them is that which lies upon us like a feather's weight; how what we set aside as a paltry consideration, not to

he reckoned in our load of cares, bows them to the very earth, who have their cares besides!

When Maggie, however, left Mitchell Street that afternoon, it was not to Poulter's Alley that she turned her steps; she took a road she had not travelled for many a day—that which led to Rosebank.

CHAPTER XVII.—'I WILL, JOHN.'

Maggie had not visited Rosebank since her father had been taken ill; the last time she had done so, the bitter knowledge of her lover's faithlessness had been thrust upon her, and all her scheme of life been shattered at a blow. But at that time there had been a hope of Richard's return to Hilton. She had gone to his house, though she did not enter it, to ask as usual for news of him. It had not been certain, as it was now, that he was either dead, or had forsaken her. A few months only had since passed over her head, but the change they had wrought in her was such as years of ordinary experience would have failed to effect. Her hair was glossy and plentiful and raven black as ever; her form, though slighter than it had been, was still graceful and shapely; but within, youth seemed to have fled from her altogether. She had heard with wonder on the previous Sunday, when she had gone to church for the first time for many weeks, the clergyman discourse upon the vanities of life, and of how men cling to them. He had used the old arguments she had heard a score of times before, and which had hitherto appeared to her sufficiently reasonable. 'The pride of life' had dwelt in her once, no doubt; she had taken pleasure in her own beauty, and delighted in the admiration which it had excited in another. Life had seemed pleasant enough, and hard to leave. But now, for her, it was emptied of all its sweetness. She put that question to herself which most men put (but not until they have attained to twice her age), and which few can answer satisfactorily to themselves: 'What have I now to live for?' The man of self-denial and good deeds may reply: 'I live for Heaven.' The man of pleasure may still hope to derive gratification from the old sources, though they are drawing near the dregs, and he is conscious that such joys are beginning to pall upon him; but with the majority of those of middle age who sit and hear that trite description of the lures and attractions of life, it has lost all meaning. It is as though the preacher should take you to a theatre by daylight, and expatiate upon the splendours of the transformation scene, and the beauty of the young persons who in the evening will be fairies. 'It is no wonder,' says he, 'that you are dazzled by the magnificence of this spectacle, and intoxicated with the charms of these ladies.' But indeed we are not dazzled, and we are not intoxicated; we are sick of going to the play, and tired of the stage altogether—the whole weary stage of life. As to mere pleasure, it has lost its charm; and as to work, we have by this time found out our measure. What we have done, indeed, we may do again, but probably not so well, and certainly not so much to our own satisfaction. There is nothing more to be hoped for that has not already been vouchsafed to us, unless, indeed, our aspirations are very mean indeed. We may heap up money, we may mix in higher society than we do at present; but if these are our hopes of happiness, we have travelled

along life's road so long to little purpose indeed, or we must be of a disposition exceptionally sanguine. True, it is always well to work; necessary to provide for our families; and obviously wicked and cowardly to cut short the thread of our own existence; but to hold up the picture of life's attractions to us is as idle as to exhibit the sign of some hotel where we have ourselves already sojourned, and drank all the best of the wine, and eaten the pick of the meat, and where nothing is left, we *know*, but indifferent liquor and cold shoulders.

Maggie Thorne had attained to this knowledge twenty years before her time, but she had attained to it. There was her father to live for, and to work for; there was Richard's child to be supported; but as for any pleasurable expectation—far less the gracious gift we call Hope—to be looked forward to in the days to come, it existed for her nowhere. The 'crown of sorrows' alone remained to her, of remembering happier days. There had been a time when the very sight of Rosebank had quickened her pulses, and brought the colour to her cheek; when the clang of its gate-bell had been music; when the scent of its flowers, as she passed through the garden, had filled her soul with ecstasy. She had wondered in her humility how everything that had then occurred to her there seemed to add to the great sum of her happiness.

She had come thither now upon an embarrassing errand, and yet she did not feel ill at ease; her misery had at least the advantage of making her indifferent and self-possessed. When the girl, in answer to her summons, informed her that John was not within, but was expected every moment, she did not, as when Martha Lynch had appeared that day instead of him at home, feel any sense of relief, of a reprieve. The associations of the place stirred her too much for that. Observing calmly that she would wait for Mr Milbank, she moved slowly towards the house, her eyes roving over each well-remembered spot. Here, beneath the southern wall, Richard, when a boy, had had a plot of garden of his own—very ill tilled—but in which grew a peach-tree, the fruit of which had always been reserved for her. In that gardener's house, where the tools were kept, and the wood was piled for winter use, she had hidden from him at 'Hide-and-Seek.' In that arbour they had sat together, while she had read to him, and he had loved to listen, not to the words, but to the voice which spoke them!

All this had happened years ago, of course, yet it seemed but yesterday. There were later memories, dearer yet, from which she shrank. Here he had plucked a rose, and given it to her with words more sweet than its fragrance. The flower was dead—in a drawer of her desk at home, but not more dead to her than he who had given it. On this very spot, behind the angle of the house, he had turned to kiss her, while her father and the rest, after an evening spent with the brothers, had gone on towards the gate. O perjured lips, that were used to press another's cheek so fondly, to whisper into another's ear the self-same vows!

With quickened step, she moved on to the door, where Mrs Morden stood and welcomed her affectionately. This was a surprise, indeed, she said; Maggie's pretty face, which had become quite strange to her, did her good to look at. It

would do Mr John good, she was sure, and sore he needed it. What had come to him, for her part, she could not tell. 'He takes no food to speak of; and drink, as you know, Miss Maggie, he never did take. And it's the same with his sleep, for he sits up half the night, walking to and fro like a ghost; and yet, in the morning, he is the first to be up and about.'

'I noticed that he was looking far from well,' said Maggie sympathisingly, 'when he called last.'

'Last!' echoed the old lady (whose deafness her visitor had for the moment forgotten), catching only that final word; 'why, of course it's impossible that he should last if he goes on like that! It has been worse than ever with him during the last fortnight. I have sometimes made bold to advise him to go down and pass an evening with Mr Thorne and yourself, for not a soul ever comes to see him. I'll go and get ready a dish of tea for both of you, over which you may be more neighbourly-like and natural: there's nothing like tea to foster pleasant talk.'

It was a great relief to Maggie when the garrulous old woman left her alone in the little parlour, full though it was of melancholy associations, for when the heart is sad, solitude is preferable to any sympathy which is not exactly tuned to the same chord of woe. In that very room, while his uncle was still on tolerable terms with him, Richard had declared his love, on just such a spring evening as the present: the old man was above-stairs; John, as now, had not yet returned from the office; one glass door was open, and one closed; the time was exactly the same as she now read it to be on the same clock-face. So long as she lived, she would never forget that time and scene, with every circumstance that environed them. If the accessories had not been present still, she could have recalled them with the exactest minuteness; but scarcely anything was changed. Upon the mantel-shelf were the two bronze vases, filled with Indian grasses, that had satisfied old Matthew Thirle's views of internal decoration, notwithstanding that a thousand roses bloomed about his door; on the walls, hung a faithful picture of the factory in which he had passed his busiest and happiest days; and opposite, was a drawing of the little establishment, half-shop, half-shed, which had been all he owned in early days. It had been his practice to contrast one with the other, and boast to every visitor, in his frank, unvarnished way, of the small beginnings of his greatness. On the walls, too, hung the portraits of his nephews, at the period when they had been admitted to the high distinction of taking part in the business of the firm, each a mere boy, whose school-days had been cut short for that very purpose. How very, very beautiful was that bright face, which even the cheap limner could not spoil! How round his brow clustered the soft brown curls which she had played with many and many a time, and one of which—long afterwards—he had given her to mingle with her own, in sign—

With a sharp pain, she turned her eyes from that fair sight, and fixed them on the portrait of his brother. That was fair too; a man would have said, more fair; more earnest and more honest, and not less comely. There was not so much sparkle in the eye; no winning smile played on the lip; no arch expression, such as proclaims the boy of spirit, alone from the canvas. Yet there was something better

than mere resolve and plodding in that thoughtful face; if it lacked assurance, it had confidence enough; in the eyes dwelt truth, and the courage to speak it.

'Ten years have changed all that, Maggie,' said a quiet voice; and by her side stood the original of the portrait, smiling sadly down upon her.

'Why, John, how you frightened me!' cried she. She spoke the truth, for so deep had she been in thought that she had heard no sign of his approach, and was really startled by it; but her alarm was far greater now, when the suddenness of the shock had passed away, and she had time to scan his face. She had been prepared, from what the housekeeper had said, to see alteration in it, but not for what she saw. His large blue eyes looked forth from two dark caverns; his cheeks had fallen in; his chin was sharpened as her father's had been when the doctor looked most grave; the delicate complexion alone remained, which had been the subject of jest from his boyhood, and was intensified. He looked more 'angelic'—as some had called him, not without reason—than she had ever seen him, and nearer to death and heaven. 'What is the matter, John?' asked she, with tender earnestness. She was very sorry to see him thus. If he were to die, it struck her, for the first time, that with her sorrow would mingle a sharp sense of ingratitude, of unacknowledgment, not of favours, but of devotion.

'Nothing is the matter, Maggie, thank you.'

'But you look so ill, John—so very, very ill.'

'I am well enough,' he said. The tone was that in which the sick man who knows better than the doctor, says: 'As well as I ever shall be.'

'You cannot be well, John, else you would have come and seen us, surely, all this time. We—that is, my father has been sorely grieved about it.'

'He sent you here, then, did he?' asked John slowly, the smile fading from his lip, and leaving his face as white and colourless as a lamp from which the light has died away.

'No! I came hither unknown to him; to ask after you, and—and, also, John, to thank you for very much. For having got into trouble on my account, for one thing.' Her cheek was scarlet, but she held her head up, and looked earnestly upon him; while he, on the other hand, looked down distressed. 'It is a very painful thing for me to speak of, and for you to listen to, John, but I must thank my champion. Let others blame you for your haste and anger. I take this hand, that struck a scoundrel down for flinging shame upon an honest girl, and kiss it.'

It was perhaps a generous impulse that prompted her, or perhaps she found it easier to do anything rather than speak upon such a subject; but the action—though she did but raise his fingers to her lips, and then dismiss them—affected him strangely. His wan cheeks flushed for an instant, and his eyes kindled with excitement; then his face grew blank again. 'O Maggie!' cried he, as though in pain, 'that is great payment for small service.'

'The service was great, John,' answered she gravely, 'and will never be forgotten. And there are other things for which I have to thank you: the loan to my father, and—and this bracelet.' She drew from her bosom a little jewel-case, and laid it on the table.

'It was among the rest of the debts,' said he slowly. 'I thought the jeweller ought to be paid, since he complained of its being thrown upon his hands.'

'You are always just and kind, John; but this does not belong to me, nor can I accept it. It was never Richard's to give; and if it had been—I mean, if it were now—her voice grew faint and low, and her words incoherent—'that is all over and gone for ever!'

He did not speak, nor even look at her, but stood silent, waiting for her to recover herself, and playing nervously on the table with his hand.

'I meant to give it you back,' resumed she presently, 'knowing well from whom it came, and why; but you did not give me the opportunity. It seemed to me that you never intended to come and see us again; that you would content yourself for the future with doing us good, by stealth if possible, and that we should be friends—in any true sense—no more. That is hard on us, John.'

'Hard on you!' repeated the other, with a hollow laugh. 'I hard on you!'

'Yes; hard on me, and very hard on my father. He wants a friend, and not only an almoner. I do not ask you why you never visit us now, because I know the reason. I was told to-day, for the first time, what people are saying about—about you and me.'

'She knows it!' murmured John, with inexpressible melancholy. 'I felt she did.'

'Yes; I know it. But I don't know why you should despise the slanders that are uttered against others, and yet take those to heart which concern yourself.'

'They are not slanders, Maggie!' cried he desperately. 'What they say is true.'

'True!' echoed she indignantly. 'What! that you rejoiced in Richard's departure, because it left "the coast clear"—that is the term they use—and freed you from a rival? If you were to tell me that you were so base as that, with your own lips, I would not credit it. No, John; if I know your heart, you would give half you have—half Richard's waste has left you—to see him once more alive and well here.'

'I would give all,' was the solemn, earnest, answer.

'I knew it! And when they say that you are kind to us, nay, kind to *him*'—here she pointed to the bracelet—and have stripped yourself of means to clear his memory from shame, and all in hopes to supplant him with her who was once betrothed to him, I know that is false too.'

'To "supplant" him, and "in hopes,"' answered John, looking quickly up at her for the first time, and speaking with intense excitement. 'Yes; that is false. I have loved you, Maggie, all my life; I could not help it; I shall love you till I die!—Nay, since you have made me speak, you must hear me out. I say, when once Richard had won you, I tried to think of you but as my sister. I did my best to make you so. It was in my power to have hindered Richard's marriage, from lack of means, and I enriched him. I look back upon the past—that past, at least—and find nothing to reproach myself with—nothing! It is a lie to say that I ever strove to supplant him; and even after he left Hilton, you can witness for me that I never spoke one word to you of more than kindness. Hopes! You little know! I

never had a hope, until this day, this hour! You said just now, that if—if he were still alive!—'

'Still alive!' echoed Maggie, trembling excessively. 'What makes you think him dead?'

'I thought *you* thought him so, because you said: "That is all over and gone for ever." It seemed to me that you would never have given him up whatever happened.'

'You were wrong, John. If he returned to-morrow, we should be strangers. There are some things a woman can forgive, but never forget. I could not be his friend even. Richard and I have shaken hands for the last time.'

'Then let me speak to you of *my* love, Maggie!' exclaimed the young man passionately. 'I do not supplant him now. I would never have wronged him, but for those words of yours, even by so much as to say "Pity me." I should have died, and you would never have known. I had made up my mind to that; and now, you have only to say "No," and you shall never hear me speak of love again.—Supplant him!' here he drew himself up, as though replying to some imaginary accuser. 'Neither present nor absent, neither living nor dead, has he been supplanted! You yourself tell me your heart is vacant, Maggie; oh! has it not a little, little space for me?'

He could plead for himself, this man, it seemed, after all; nothing could exceed the pathos and earnestness of his tones; and yet his manner, though eager, was forced, and that confidence was altogether lacking which makes half the eloquence of a lover's prayer.

Maggie looked at him, not coldly, indeed, for her face was full of tender pity, but with infinite regret.

'It wounds me to the quick, John, to give you the answer which I yet perceive you to expect. My love is lost with Richard, or buried with him. I have it not to give even to you, whom I respect and admire above all men. My heart is not vacant, as you termed it, but withered. It has loved once, whether worthily or unworthily, it matters not, and can never love again, any more than a dead tree can put forth leaves.'

'You mistake me, Maggie,' answered John, with a calm that bespoke the depth of the passion beneath it: 'I am not so hopeful as you imagine. Since I have borne so long to see you love another, I can bear to see you without love at all. I can bear to marry you so, Maggie, and be thankful. Listen a moment, before you say "No" again, for it will be the last word you will ever speak to me. I really do not mean, dear, to threaten you!—it is no threat at all. I shall live for months, for years perhaps, but not here. This lonely place, the very town itself, has become intolerable to me, and I shall leave it. You may be sure that your father shall not have cause to miss me, at least in a material way. I am not bidding for you, Maggie. What is mine will be yours, whether *you* consent to be mine or not. I have no other object to live for but your comfort: I never had.'

'O John, John!' cried Maggie, 'if I had all to offer you that a good man has a right to expect in her he weds, I should not be worthy of you; but as it is, how can I?—'

'Worthy of me!' interrupted he, with bitterness. 'Don't talk like that, Maggie. You don't know what you are talking about. I am worthy of no

woman's love, far less of yours. I'— Here he stopped suddenly, and leaning on the table, rocked himself from side to side. His agitation was terrible to witness, and smote Maggie to the heart.

'I should say, John, that that was mock humility, if one of the best of men had not once called himself "the chief of sinners,"' said she. 'I know you are no hypocrite; you would never play a false part, though it were to gain the world.'

'I don't know about "the world," Maggie; but I think I would do anything, fair or foul, to possess you. Please to give me my answer, for every moment that I look at you, and hear your voice, will make my doom the harder. Dear girl, be merciful,' cried he, with piteous passion. 'You touched my hand just now with your sweet lips—why, that was more to me than warmest kiss from her he loved would have been to another man! I do not look for love, though love will come. It must, it must! Give me the chance to win it! Or even if that be hopeless, call me yours, and let me call you mine! O Maggie, will you be my wife!'

'I will, John!'

They were plain passionless words enough, and though a smile went with them, it was the smile that gilds the favour granted to importunity, rather than that which should accompany a maiden's 'Yes.' But the effect on John was electrical. His face lit up with joy; his very limbs, which, as though weighed down by despondency and lack of hope, had hung loose and listless, seemed suddenly to acquire strength and vigour; for a single instant, all his lost youth and beauty seemed to revisit him, as he seized Maggie's hand and covered it with kisses. She had crowned his wretched life with those un hoped-for words, as King Cophetua crowned the beggar maid; and his love was still very humble.

Poor Maggie was thankful that it was so; but she could not help contrasting her new lover's modest triumph in his success with Richard's raptures on a like occasion. The recollection gave her a momentary pang; but she did not repent of having yielded to John's appeal. By so doing, she had secured the happiness of the two beings whom she revered most in the world, John Milbank and her father; and it had been said that our own happiness is always found in seeking that of other people. There was one thing only that troubled her—a very foolish trouble, since it was certain that the matter would be arranged according to her own wishes; but she regretted that she had not made a stipulation that she should be permitted to adopt the child in Poulter's Alley. She could hardly make it now, far less give her reasons for desiring it; which were, that when married to John, she might have something to love—in Richard's son.

The successful wooer must have had his trouble too, for long after Maggie had departed from Rosebank—her promise given that she would become its mistress in a few weeks—he paced the little parlour with restless tread; at supper-time the unfasted food remained upon his fork, while he sat back in his chair, and, wrapt in thought, stared blankly at the wall; and once, but this was far into the night, he threw himself upon his knees, and clasped his hands, but the next moment, with a pitiful despairing cry, rose up again, to pace the room once more till morning came.

WASTEFUL DESTRUCTION OF BUFFALOES.

SOME years ago we used to hear of vast numbers of sheep being slaughtered in Australia, and boiled down for the sake of their fat. The meat was thrown away. It always struck us as a cruel and wasteful thing to kill so many animals in order to fill barrels with tallow. The preparation of meat for export in air-tight tins, has seemingly put an end to this wastefulness of food. While matters are so far improving in Australia, intelligence arrives of a destruction of animal food in America, which, if anything, goes beyond all that has been previously heard of. We refer to the hunting and killing of buffaloes wholesale, for the mere sake of their skins, the value of which on the spot is said to be very trifling. It has long been known that the practice was carried on to some extent in parts of South America. Now it is pursued with relentless ardour in the United States. On this subject we copy the following from a late number of *Nature*, and leave it to make its own impression: 'The enormous extent of the destruction of buffaloes on the western plains of the United States seems to have undergone no diminution during the present winter, and there is every reason to fear that, should this continue a few years longer, the animal will become as scarce as is its European congener at the present day. At present, thousands of buffaloes are slaughtered, every day, for their hides alone, which, however, have glutted the market to such an extent, that, whereas, a few years ago, they were worth three dollars apiece at the railroad stations, skins of bulls now bring but one dollar, and those of cows and calves sixty and forty cents, respectively. A recent short surveying expedition in Kansas led to the discovery of the fact that, on the south fork of the Republican, upon one spot, were to be counted six thousand five hundred carcasses of buffaloes, from which the hides only had been stripped. The meat was not touched, but left to rot on the plains. At a short distance hundreds more of carcasses were discovered, and, in fact, the whole plains were dotted with putrefying remains of buffaloes. It was estimated that there were at least two thousand hunters encamped along the plains, hunting the buffalo. One party of sixteen stated that they had killed twenty-eight hundred during the past summer, the hides only being utilised.'

APRIL.

APRIL! thou hast a star upon thy brow,
A star of glory, splendider than those
That grace thy circle from the primal rose,
Or meadow daisy, or the leafing bough,
Or sportive young of fruitful ewe or cow,
Or gentle wind, or shower, or sky that glows
With sapphire hue, or birds whose music flows
Melodiously from every branchlet. Thou
Wast the auspicious month of Shakspeare's birth,
The horizon line from which his splendid mind
Rose upward to illuminate the earth,
And sequent generations of mankind,
With that full brilliance of consummate song
Which holds the world in one still, listening throng.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.
Also sold by all Booksellers.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 537.

SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 1874.

Price 1½d.

UNCLE JOB OR UNCLE ARISTIDES?

'WELL, Harry, baby must have another god-father, and I don't see why Uncle Aristides should not be asked. He will, I know, accept, and is sure to remember the child.' Thus spake Mrs Highfly to her husband, as over the tea-table they concerted arrangements for the christening of their first-born.

Mr Highfly apparently paid little heed to his wife's remark, and was about to ask her to again pass him the toast, when, glancing upward toward the lady's face, he perceived indications of a coming storm. He could tell from certain outward and visible signs that his Matilda Jane meditated a sudden swoop, so, nerving himself for the encounter, he responded in a mild tone: 'We ought not, dear, to forget Uncle Job.'

The tempest broke. Mr Highfly had been expecting it, but not so soon. The lightning was flashing in his wife's eyes, and the thunder of her majestic voice was rattling about his ears in a couple of seconds after he had spoken. The reference to Uncle Job did it.

'Uncle Job indeed!' exclaimed the irate Matilda Jane, every fibre of her body seeming to quiver with passion. 'Who next would you like to stand to your child?'

When Mrs Highfly tossed her head, and thus indicated supreme contempt for her husband's selection of a sponsor, his reply was as follows: 'With Uncle Job, my dear, we have the required number, and we need not further pursue the subject, unless, having in your mind's eye—Shakspeare, dear—the likelihood of other christenings to come, you are preparing a list of eligible persons to keep by you.'

Poor Mr Highfly made this remark in his softest manner, and the little simper with which he concluded would have made it apparent to any one that he was only giving utterance to a timid joke. Stately Mrs Highfly, however, did not choose to accept it as such, but turning savagely upon her husband, poured out some scathing remarks. Pausing to see what would be the effect upon

Harry, and observing that he was unconcernedly sipping his tea, she bounced from the room, noisily banging the door after her.

Whilst the good lady of the house has gone to vent her spite upon the domestic below stairs, the opportunity may be taken of introducing Mr and Mrs Highfly in a more satisfactory manner.

From his youth upward, Harry Highfly had been a clerk in Cashit and Bullion's Bank, in Threadneedle Street, and from being one of the juniors, had risen to a confidential and important position. He owed none of his advancement to influential relatives, since his parents had been humble country-folk, who died soon after their son came to the metropolis. He was an only child, and knew of no blood-relations but an uncle on his mother's side. Uncle Job Smith, however, was a sort of nobody—that is to say, he had tried a good many things, and always failed; he was a bachelor, but liked company; Uncle Job was, in fact, a 'choice spirit'; his friends always welcomed him when they wanted a bright, jovial, mirth-creating fellow among them; but the same good people invariably 'cut' poor Job when they met him next day in a crowded thoroughfare. It was all very well to know him in private, but in public it was an entirely different matter. Job was a good-hearted, generous soul, ready to lend his last shilling to any one who asked him; an act, however, seldom within his power, inasmuch as he was more often compelled to borrow than able to lend. Of course, people with any reputation wouldn't publicly recognise Job Smith, for he had three times figured in the *Gazette*—three times in fifteen years. Is not that shocking? The first occasion was when he was in partnership with Steppit, the greaser in Bristol. A noble establishment they had too. The shop was blocked with tea-chests, but, unfortunately, the chests were empty. The partnership existed for six months, and then Steppit ran away, leaving Job to settle all the claims. A good many people averred Job had been swindled, but he himself did not say much about it. By the way, you would not have expected Job would, for he was never known to utter an unkind or ill-natured word of

any one. Harry, however, stuck to his uncle amid this and his other reverses, for the remembrance of former kindnesses lived in his memory. When Harry was in his thirtieth year, and had obtained a good position in the banking establishment, he looked about him for a wife. He is very small of stature, and, following the example of most little men, fell in love with a lady who was above the average height of her sex. Matilda Jane Brownjohn, like her snitor, had but few relatives living—a mother and an uncle. This was at the outset a wonderful recommendation, but it was not the only one. M. J. Brownjohn had money—fifteen hundred pounds in round numbers, left her by deceased connections, in addition to some three hundred more saved by careful economy during the twenty-eight years of her existence. She was not exactly good-looking when Harry married her, and has not improved since; but many people I know have rather a preference for sharp features, a lurid tinge in the hair, a long neck, and a bony figure. Harry, for example, considered her a very fine woman—a splendid creature; and he backed his opinion by making her Mrs Highfly. The lady had borne this honourable title some fifteen months when an heir came to share the family prosperity. Harry, it need scarcely be said, was immensely proud of his offspring, who was reported by every one to be exactly like his father. Had the opinion been *vice versa*, perhaps Harry would not have been so jubilant, for he had discovered (come closer, dear reader, that I may whisper this) that he had married a 'deuce of a temper,' as well as a magnificent woman. Happily, the little man was not easily roused; and when she had tired, his good-humour remained undisturbed, and the wonted merry twinkle of his eye was not in the slightest degree dimmed. When the infant was a couple of months old, the subject of the christening arose, and many a battle-royal was fought over the choice of sponsors. When he had married, Harry had taken a small semi-detached villa just outside Ealing, and their next neighbours being the Fozzles, an intimacy soon arose. Mrs Fozzle having been summoned to the bedside of Matilda Jane at a very critical period, and having, with Mr F. expressed a desire to act as god-parents to the youthful Highfly, it was impossible to balk their wish. Over the remaining sponsor there ensued the grand struggle; Harry would have liked his Uncle Job (whom Matilda Jane seldom allowed within the house); but his larger, if not better half was determined that her Uncle Aristides, her late father's brother, should be selected. Matilda Jane, be it noted, believed in her uncle, who had passed some years in Australia, but was now an oilman in the Borough, a bachelor, and, by reason of his colonial experiences, claimed to be a very clever and practical man. This gentleman, like Matilda Jane's surviving parent, snubbed Harry, and considered him as much inferior to them in intellectual and moral attributes as he was in size; so, altogether a very pretty family quarrel seemed to be brewing over the matter of the christening of the infant Highfly.

On the present occasion, the irritable Mrs Highfly allowed her spouse an hour and a half's peace ere she returned to renew the attack. Harry, being in

the calm enjoyment of a cigar, and the latest novel, was indisposed to resume hostilities; but the lady was not to be defeated in her object. She bustled about the place, noisily arranging the chairs, &c, savagely stirring the fire, and ringing the hand-bell for the servant with such vehemence, that at last Harry was fain to put aside his novel, and content himself with smoking and staring into the blazing coals. Mrs Highfly was an adept in all those petty feminine devices for annoying the male sex which seem to be born in some women; so, when she saw that she had succeeded in making her husband forego the exciting narrative which had soled him in her absence, she began to make comments about the ill-savour of his cigar, and the disagreeable consequences likely to ensue to the winter curtains, only that morning brought out, and suspended for the ensuing season.

When all else failed to arouse the placid Harry, Mrs Highfly invariably fell back upon the quality of his cigars, which she querulously proceeded to disparage.

'Oh, that's your opinion is it? Well, look here; you seem to know a lot about tobacco; but I don't know how you should, unless the old lady used to have hers on the quiet, and puff it up the chimney.' By the 'old lady,' Harry alluded to the respectable person who owned Matilda Jane as her daughter. Certainly, it was a highly improper remark to make, but he was so goaded by his wife's sneers, that he was not disposed to stick at such a trifle as filial respect. It need scarcely be said that at once Matilda Jane's flood-gates were opened, a copious shower of tears burst forth, but amid her sobs she managed to utter such phrases as: 'Was it for this I married you? Do you think my mother is an old Irish woman!—my mother, who comes from one of the first Scotch families, although she cannot now boast of ancestral estates;' &c.

Harry was exceedingly fond of his wife, despite her aggravating temper, and knew that she worked hard to insure the comfort, and preserve the respectability of his home. He could not bear to see her cry; so, impatiently flinging his cigar into the fire, he approached, and attempted to throw oil upon the troubled waters.

'Well, Matilda Jane, perhaps I did go a little too far. I didn't mean to hurt your feelings.'

'Oh, you treat me cruelly,' exclaimed the sobbing lady; 'you try my love too much, indeed you do. But, since you retract, and are sorry for what you've done, why, I forgive you.'

Matilda Jane dried her eyes—it was wonderful what control she had over those water-spouts—and in a brief space she brought her work to the fire, and began stitching away at baby's first pinafore, as though nothing had occurred to disturb the matrimonial harmony. Harry once more took up his novel, and was getting deeply interested in a love-scene, when his wife, noticing that his temper was restored again, returned to the charge.

'Harry, dear,' she said, 'I don't wish to be troublesome; but, remember, we have not yet settled about the christening.' Her husband tranquilly observed that, although he was then in a most critical portion of the novel, he was quite ready to talk about what was so near to his Matilda Jane's heart; to which his spouse answered: 'That's a dear good fellow; my Harry's himself again.' The artful Mrs H. had an idea that by

a further exhibition of temper she might make her husband obstinate: the end she had in view was more likely to be attained by a show of conciliation and wifely obedience. She resumed: 'Of course, if you would prefer Uncle Job to Uncle Aristides, why, we'll send the invitation to Uncle Job at once; only—you won't be angry, will you, Harry, if I tell you why I would rather have Uncle Aristides? Promise, you won't, now, dear!' That insinuating woman, as though swayed by an uncontrollable impulse of affection, suddenly thrust baby's pinafore aside, and pulling her gaunt figure up to its full height, clasped her husband's head between her two hands, and gave him a sounding kiss. What loving husband could do less than smile benignantly, draw a stool to his side, and invite the partner of his life to sit thereon? Thus comfortably posed, Matilda and her husband debated whether Uncle Job or Uncle Aristides was to carry the day.

'Now, Harry,' resumed Mrs Highfly, 'we can't blind ourselves to the fact, that there's a vast difference in the social position of our uncles. Aristides Brownjohn is a thriving tradesman, and has no one to leave his money to but ourselves: we know he's taken a great fancy to our boy, and expects to be asked. If he isn't, perhaps he'll take offence, and leave all his property to an hospital or something. Do you see that, Harry?'

Her husband nodded his head. So far, Matilda's way of putting the matter was certainly sensible, and displayed a proper consideration for the future prosperity of their offspring.

'Now, let's look at the other side. Uncle Job—dear old fellow as he is!' (Harry was somewhat surprised to hear his wife speak of his sole relative in these affectionate terms)—'is little else but a waif and stray. Everybody knows it's not his fault, but whatever he touches, he's sure to make a mess of. Now, isn't it so?'

To this obvious truth, Harry again was compelled to nod his head.

'We are sorry to disappoint Uncle Job, but neither you nor I would like the taint of misfortune to attach to our boy. Uncle Job would give him something if he could, but then he can't; whereas Uncle Aristides is sure to bring him a fork and spoon, or a silver mug at the least. We can't ask both, because Mr Brownjohn has never met Mr Smith, and they might be jealous of each other, which would never do. Now, Harry, how is it to be?'

After such a specious argument as this, what could the pliant husband say? Let us put ourselves in his place. We don't like that blustering, loud-voiced, boastful, and opinionated old humbug Brownjohn; but then, he's prosperous, and hasn't a relative but ourselves. On the other hand, we do like that good-natured, modest, and simple-hearted old angel, Job Smith, and we know how proud he'd be to stand sponsor to the infant; but then, he's as poor as a church-mouse, and people say he's rapidly drifting for the fourth time towards that fatal maelstrom, the Bankruptcy Court. As that far-seeing Matilda Jane says, we must not allow our own desires to interfere with the interests of our offspring.

Of course, Matilda Jane knew how it would be; she had in solemn and secret conference with her mother settled it a fortnight ago, and the conversation with Harry was merely a sort of

compromise with her conscience, for never should it be said of that young matron that she had broken the vow made to 'love, honour, and obey.' The only thing now to be decided on was the day, and name. Tuesday would suit everybody nicely. What did Matilda's husband say to Harry (out of compliment to himself), Aristides (in honour of the Borough tradesman), Horatio (as a sort of sop in the pan to old Foozle, who bore that name), Ajax (classical, and *distingué*, my dear), and Brownjohn (must have a family name)? What could be more mellifluous than 'Harry Aristides Horatio Ajax Brownjohn Highfly?' Nothing; at least so Matilda said. Having yielded so much, it was not worth while making further resistance; so Harry allowed that Philistine of a wife to shear his locks and bind him with cords until he was positively helpless.

'Now everything is settled,' said the jubilant Mrs Highfly, 'suppose we write to Uncle Aristides, and acquaint him with the result?'

'Out of courtesy, we ought also to write to Uncle Job.'

'Oh, certainly, my dear,' responded Mrs Highfly. 'Will you write both letters?'

'Well, Matilda Jane, I think you might drop a line to Uncle Job; it would come from you with rather a better grace than from me; that is to say, dear, a letter from you would be a species of salve for his disappointment.' The truth was, Harry, after half-inviting his relative to stand godfather, when he met him a few days before at a luncheon bar in the City, was ashamed to back out of the matter; but he knew if Job Smith got a note from Matilda Jane, he would pretty accurately guess the reason why his aid at the christening was dispensed with.

Mrs Highfly immediately brought forth her writing materials, and the reconciled couple proceeded with their epistles. This is what Matilda Jane wrote to Uncle Job:

DEAR UNCLE—You know well how pleased we should have been for you to be one of the godfathers to our darling treasure, but, unfortunately, Harry has a friend whom it would be very impolitic to offend, and, under these circumstances, I am sure you will excuse our not asking you next Tuesday. Best love, &c.—Yours, very affectionately,

M. J. HIGHFLY.

This is how Harry addressed his prosperous relative in the Borough:

DEAR OLD UNCLE—Excuse this familiarity, but we want you to act in an official capacity at the christening on Tuesday next. Don't trouble to answer this, because we are determined to enlist your sympathies on behalf of our boy in a practical manner. Tilley joins in love, and I am—Yours ever,

HARRY HIGHFLY.

Scarcely had these important communications been penned, than a loud knock was heard at the front-door: hastily gathering up the letters into a couple of envelopes, Mr Highfly placed them in his pocket, ready to post the next morning; whilst his wife proceeded to the stair-head, to ascertain who were their visitors. It proved to be only Mr and Mrs Foozle, who had called to have a quiet chat; and in their pleasant company, we, for that evening, drop the curtain upon Harry and his wife.

At last came the eventful day. Wondrous preparations for the great occasion had been made by Mrs Highfly (who was really an excellent housewife), and the result was, that Mr and Mrs Fozzle saw awaiting them, when the ceremony should be over, a repast in every way enticing. There were fowls, a huge joint of beef, meat pasties, and such a profusion of custards and tartlets, that Mrs Fozzle began to think whether she could not manoeuvre to introduce into the house, ere the day was at an end, a select few of her own numerous brood. Harry was indeed proud of the managerial capabilities of his wife, as he gazed from end to end of the well-filled table, and could not refrain from enlarging upon her merits to Fozzle as they stood together before the mantel-piece waiting the arrival of the other sponsor.

Mrs Highfly was too nervous yet to make her appearance; she was very busy up-stairs preparing baby for church; that young imp, with his face as red as a fresh-boiled lobster, exhibiting the greatest disinclination to be dressed in a becoming manner, and loudly proclaiming the fact by a continued series of the most discordant yells. The anxious mamma and nurse were doing their utmost to prevent the noise reaching the trio down-stairs, but you might as well have attempted to quiet a town-crier or a street singer. They might shut the door, but still the voice of Harry's offspring predominated over everything else, and caused the two gentlemen below to cease their debate upon the probabilities of a rise or fall in the bank rate of discount, and the prospects of the new Pawangalo loan, until a more fitting opportunity.

'Ah, sir,' remarked Fozzle, helping himself to a third glass of port, 'it's a grand thing to be a father; magnificent feeling, sir; gives a man such a sense of responsibility! Throughout an experience of many years, I never knew a good father who was not a good man. And let me tell you, Mr Highfly, in the same lengthy and varied experience, I have always found that he who has most children is also the best.' Harry, glancing at his watch, looked from the window, but failed to see Aristides Brownjohn approaching, and was, with increased mental perturbation, preparing himself for a renewal of his neighbour's prosy argument, when Matilda Jane, blushing with maternal pride, and accompanied by her mamma and baby, entered the apartment.

'What!' exclaimed Mrs Highfly, 'has Uncle Aristides not arrived? I do hope nothing has happened to the dear soul. If he don't come in a few minutes, you shall walk up to the station, Harry, and ask if any accident has occurred on the line.'

Her husband not seeming quite to enter into her views—the nearest railway station being quite a mile from their abode—Mrs Highfly impatiently turned towards her visitors, and proceeded to extol the virtues of the missing one. Suffering from his spouse's loquacity, and the anxiety he experienced lest old Fozzle, by reason of his fondness for port, would have to remain at home, and be put to bed, it was with no small degree of satisfaction that Harry heard the sound of rat-tat.

The assembled company are eagerly listening for the approach of footsteps, and when the door opens, expect to see the majestic form of the great Aristides. There enters instead the maid-servant; she whispers to Harry, who, in turn, murmurs to

his agitated wife: 'I'm afraid, dear, there is some mistake;' and both leave the room.

In as brief a space as it takes to read this line, they were in the passage. Before them, attired in a suit of seedy but well-brushed black, and with his hand gently smoothing a suspiciously shiny hat, stood the discarded Job Smith. 'Well, Harry,' said the new-comer, perceiving their confusion; 'what's the meaning of all this? Is the christening over?'

'Did—didn't you receive Matilda's letter?' gasped Harry.

'I got one from you, and here it is.' Before the eyes of the bewildered Highfly there fluttered the epistle which had been intended for old Brownjohn! In the hurry occasioned by the arrival of visitors on the evening when the letters had been written, they had got into the wrong envelopes; and the wealthy uncle had doubtless received the missive that had been meant for the despised Job!

Cold drops stood upon the foreheads of both husband and wife as they saw the mistake that had been made; their tongues seemed locked within their teeth; their limbs appeared deprived of motion, and thus they stood, to the wonderment of unsuspecting Uncle Smith.

'Why don't one of you speak? What's happened? Isn't there a baby? Or are you so delighted to see me that you've each gone stark staring mad? Are you?—' What further interrogatory the amazed Job would have put will never be known, inasmuch as at that moment the street door immediately behind him was heavily smitten by means of the knocker. The person who, without a word of inquiry, strode into the passage, and stood twixt the Highflies and Job created as much surprise to Harry's relative as he had occasioned but a few minutes previously.

'O Uncle Brownjohn,' exclaimed Matilda Jane, suddenly recovering her speech, and rushing into his arms, 'I'm so glad you've come! Now, all can be explained.'

Brownjohn firmly withdrew from his niece's embrace, and gazing sternly at her, said, in a tone evidently meant to penetrate from the cellar to the attic of the semi-detached villa: 'Yes, if you please. An explanation, by all means. First of all: how is it that you, Matilda, and your mother, made me promise to stand god-father; and that, after getting up the details of the important ceremony—to say nothing of preparing a long speech for the luncheon—I'm told I'm not wanted?'

Alas! it was all over. Henceforth, the Brownjohn property was to be diverted from the Highflies and their successors; by an unlucky accident, their future hopes were blighted. The disappointed parents saw all this staring them in the face as plainly as though old Brownjohn had written it upon the wall of the passage in which he stood. Ere Matilda had concluded a blundering attempt at an excuse, the loud-voiced Brownjohn roared: 'Madam! no more; I shake your dust from off my feet. Expect nothing from me.'

During this conversation, Job had been attentively examining Matilda's uncle—gazing at him from top to toe, and eyeing him from right to left. At the moment when the great Aristides was about to depart, Job was, with his hands upon his knees, intent upon a minute observation of the burly oil-man's boots.

Brownjohn looked down, and Job looked up—the

result being that their eyes met. Then Harry and Matilda saw the sturdy Brownjohn turn pale, and the hitherto submissive Job adopt a defiant air, as he said: 'O Mr Bob Steppit, I've found you at last, have I!'

Could it be possible? Brownjohn, the prosperous tradesman of the Borough, was no other than the man who, many years ago, had so disgracefully defrauded that good-hearted trusting Job!

The doubt which dwelt in the mind of the Highflyer was but momentary. Who could resist the evidence afforded by the sudden change in Brownjohn's face, the air of abject submission with which he begged Uncle Job to speak in a more subdued tone, and finally, the promise he gave that he would make restitution!

'Come into this room, where we cannot be heard,' said the discomfited braggart, leading the way to the back parlour. 'You, also, Harry and Matilda.'

They complied; and then Uncle Aristides explained, that having quarrelled with some of his relatives, they were unaware of his being in business at Bristol; they imagined he had departed for Australia; but it was not until two years after he had bidden them farewell that he left England. The adoption of the name Steppit precluded discovery. Of course, he had heard Harry speak of his Uncle Smith; but never having met the latter when visiting the Ealing villa, he little thought it was the same man he had so injured. He confessed his misdeeds, and begged Job's forgiveness; he felt the only recompense in his power was to offer him half his present thriving business. But Job had had enough of partnerships, specially in connection with Brownjohn; so, ultimately, a compromise was thus effected: Old Brownjohn (who in his penitence shone with far greater lustre than he ever had done in his life before) gave a solemn promise that he would at once proceed to his solicitor and make a will entirely in favour of Harry and Matilda. As for the christening—well, recent events had somewhat upset him; so, if Uncle Job would not mind taking his place, he should be obliged.

Matilda looked appealingly at Job, and hoped her dear uncle (it was wonderful how suddenly he had risen in her estimation!) would pardon the neglect with which she had hitherto treated him. She was about to make a lengthy appeal; but he stopped her with a kiss; and giving Harry a hearty shake of the hand, inquired whether the clergyman would not be impatiently awaiting them.

Five minutes after the crest-fallen and repentant Brownjohn had departed, the rest of the party were on their way to the church. That artful Mrs Highfly took occasion, while proceeding thither, to ask Uncle Job whether he would like the child called by any special name: she chose to forget that she had settled the matter a week before. But that unaffected creature shook his head, and said he thought simple names were the best; so, at the last moment, it was decided to have the infant called 'Harry,' and nothing else.

At luncheon, old Brownjohn was not missed, for Uncle Job was in such high spirits, was so rich in humorous anecdote, and, finally, uttered such a pretty modest speech, when he proposed the health of the infant, that the whole affair passed off in the most agreeable manner.

To Harry's delight, Job Smith is now a constant

visitor, and he always receives a genial welcome from Matilda. The great Aristides does not come very often, and displays to them none of that bombast which was in former times his characteristic.

SOME IDEAS ABOUT THE SUN.

DURING the last few years, a number of men of science have been making laborious and singularly interesting investigations into a variety of circumstances connected with the sun. These inquiries have been carried on in England, France, Italy, America, and some other countries with the greatest assiduity. The result has been sundry papers read before learned societies, or detached works issued for general readers; the most bulky and highly illustrated of these productions being styled *Contributions to Solar Physics*, by the eminent London astronomer, J. Norman Lockyer, one of whose coadjutors has been Dr Balfour Stewart.

Everybody knows in a general way what the sun is like, how it seems to rise and set daily, and how it is the source of light and heat; but as perhaps not many have heard of the new facts lately disclosed concerning it, we shall offer a few familiar explanations on the subject. In the first place, let us pave the way by mentioning, that the size or volume of the sun is twelve hundred thousand times greater than our earth. It is scarcely possible to form a correct notion of this extraordinary magnitude; for it baffles all ordinary conceptions. We may be assisted by the following fact. The mean distance of the moon from the earth is 237,600 miles, at which distance is its orbit all round. Now, so vast is the size of the sun, that it is twice as great as the moon's orbit. In other words, if we conceive the earth placed in the centre of the sun, with the moon revolving round it, that orbit would still be at a depth within the sun of more than 187,000 miles from its surface.

The distance of the sun from the earth is calculated to be ninety-one millions of miles, and across this space light travels in eight and a half minutes, or, at the rate of 186,000 miles in a second of time. At the same rate of speed, it is calculated that light from the remotest and faintest stars of our stellar system does not reach the earth in less than 3500 years. The rays of light which left some of them in the era of Moses and the patriarchs are only now becoming visible. Although ninety-one millions of miles distant, the sun, by the use of powerful telescopes, can be brought to an apparent distance of a hundred and eighty thousand miles. Nearer, the present appliances of science cannot bring it. But who can tell what may yet be done in the telescopic art? Future astronomers may be able to bring the apparent distance very much less than a hundred and eighty thousand miles. Even at that distance, however, things can be distinguished by various instruments of modern invention, which will surprise those who do not keep in mind the prodigious dimensions and luminous character of the

object looked at. To us, the sun appears a large brilliant ball, sailing grandly across the heavens. To the inhabitants of the sun—if there were such—the earth would look little bigger than a pea—a thing barely noticeable.

Although the sun is twelve hundred thousand times greater than the earth, its weight is not in the same proportion. It is only three hundred thousand times heavier than the earth; so that, bulk for bulk, it is only one-quarter as dense. This want of density, however, is compensated for by its vast size, so that its mass is sufficient to attract the various planets, and keep them whirling round it at their respective distances. The comparatively large bulk furnishes the advantage of radiating from a spacious surface the qualities of light and heat—all circumstances, as regards ends to be served, being of the finest possible adjustment. The sun and its attendant planets, with their sub-planets or moons, constitute together a machine of such marvellous perfection and regularity, that, after numberless ages, the process of movement, according to set laws, has undergone no appreciable derangement.

Our wonder at this stupendous accuracy is lost in the knowledge, that, after all, the sun, with its planetary system, is a mere unit in creation. Scientifically speaking, the sun is a star. It is just one of the many stars in the firmament. Every one of the myriads of stars visible to the eye, is a sun rotating in its own assigned portion of space, with, in all probability, planetary bodies wheeling around it. Even that does not complete the wonder. Translated to the most distant of these suns, we should still see suns at immeasurable distances; and so on we might go, travelling through an eternity of suns and attendant worlds—the journey endless, on and on for ever. Can any one think of this prolific magnificence without lifting up his heart in awe and admiration of the Almighty creator and sustainer? Let us, however, come down to particulars about the sun in our own system.

The common notion is, that it is a pure shining body, always presenting to us the same surface. Investigations do not sustain the belief as to uniformity of appearance. It is ascertained to turn on its axis like our own earth, with this difference, that instead of four-and-twenty hours, its complete rotation requires about five-and-twenty days. Acquainted with this fact, we are led to understand some of the more remarkable phenomena of the sun. These consist of certain dark spots of different dimensions, and very irregular outlines, which are discovered on its surface. The spots seemingly shift their relative position. The shifting is only apparent, being partly due to the rotation, which exhibits the surface at different points of view. The nature of these spots has been a matter of much speculation, and even now the question regarding them is not quite settled. Assuming that the sun is substantially a dark body, surrounded with a shining surface, a region of light-and-heat-giving vapour radiating earthwards and sunwards, called the *photosphere*, it was thought by Dr Wilson of Glasgow, in 1769, that the dark spots were cavities or openings in this luminous

surface, through which the body of the sun was visible. Recent inquiries tend to confirm this opinion. Usually, as is observed, the dark spots are environed by bright streaks of wild fantastic appearance, spoken of as *facule*, the Latin word for torches. There is, however, great difficulty in coming to any distinct idea of the spots, for, independently of the apparent shifting by rotation, they sometimes assume the most extraordinary changes in a single day, or from hour to hour. Their size is tremendous. A width of fifty thousand miles across is not uncommon—a size more than sufficient to swallow up a body several times the size of the habitable globe.

That the sun has not a perfectly smooth surface, is now thoroughly known by observations made during solar eclipses. When the body of the moon covers the disc of the luminary, it is seen that there are huge protuberances of a red colour projecting like mountain masses beyond the edges of the photosphere. It is only when the dazzling light of the photosphere is hid that these become visible. On such occasions, a photograph is taken by a suitable apparatus, and a picture is secured of the projections, along with the luminous corona or glory surrounding the darkened body. Besides what seem to be comparatively permanent projections from the sun's disc, there are observed to be streams of flame shooting wildly out to a height of thousands of miles. These flames, which are red in appearance, are believed to consist of incandescent gases, bursting from the body of the sun like the torrents of fiery vapour from a volcano. The height reached by the flames is reckoned to be at times at least seventy-two thousand miles above the photosphere. Flames so lofty and so magnificent in dimensions, fill one with astonishment. We call them *flames*, for want of any other term to express their appearance. Properly speaking, they are demonstrations of a hot gas in which there is no actual burning. Fire can take place only where there is oxygen or some other gas to support combustion, and in this case there is no evidence of there being any gas but hydrogen. The flame-like aspect does not, therefore, comprehend the principle of destruction.

It has been ascertained that the photosphere is always in a state of violent agitation. It appears as a stormy ocean of luminous matter, rolling at a height above the body of the sun, and to it may be imputed the light and heat which are radiated to the earth and other planets. The composition of the photosphere and of the other envelopes of the sun has been the subject of prolonged investigation, by means of that wonderful instrument of modern invention, the spectroscope. Strange as it may seem, this instrument, when turned towards a luminous body like the sun, no matter how distant, can tell with certainty that such and such substances enter into its composition, and also whether they are in a gaseous state, or solid, or liquid. By this means the presence in the sun of the vapours of sodium, magnesium, barium, and iron has been ascertained. Hydrogen is also a prominent ingredient in the sun's atmosphere, if we may so call it. Immediately outside the photosphere, or bright surface, there is a layer of red-hot hydrogen, called the *chromosphere*, rising here and there into those protuberances we spoke of, and occasionally bursting out in jets of flame tens of thousands of miles high. Below this, we have the *photosphere*, a

region containing metallic vapours, along, probably, with numerous deposited cloud-particles of these vapours, which form, as it were, small centres of radiation. To supply the waste of heat caused by this radiation, the surface of the photosphere is kept in constant agitation by convection-currents, the cooled portions sinking down, and warmer matter being heaved up. It is believed that these upheavals cause the faculæ; and that the spots are produced by a down-rush of comparatively cold matter from the chromosphere into hollows of the photosphere.

There is a far grander problem to be solved. How are we to account scientifically for the origin, the formation of the sun, and its planetary attendants? What explanation may be given on these points, would apply to all the suns in the universe. Theologically, the world was made out of nothing, which is quite true; the word nothing, by an allowable interpretation, signifying nothing solid or tangible. The elements of creation are understood to have been masses of gaseous matter scattered like luminous filmy clouds in the realms of space, which modern science designates as *nebulae*, from *nebula*, the Latin for a cloud. Some writers have fancifully spoken of the nebulae as star-dust, as being the rudimentary material from which stars have been formed. From this nebulous or dust-like condition, the particles are supposed to be aggregated through a concurrence of forces, and by a series of progressive developments the primordial chaos is concentrated into a solid sphere. In other words, the whole of material nature—land, water, rocks, metals, vegetables, animal substances, and even the air we breathe—may be said to consist of the nebulous gases in different combinations and degrees of condensation, and into the same primary condition they may be chemically resolved. What was the extent of the nebulae at the beginning of created existence, no one can tell. They may have filled the whole universe. All we know is, that they still abundantly exist. Sir John Herschel made a catalogue of upwards of five thousand discoverable by the telescope.

We cannot, in this little sketch, describe the progressive stages which this last-named astronomer assigns to the nebular aggregation, as seen in the heavens. La Place, in his great work, the *Mécanique Céleste*, traces the condensation to the force of gravity. According to his view, a mass of nebulous matter formed the nucleus of the sun, which, being endued with a rotating motion, threw off masses in the shape of rings; then these rings breaking and contracting in length, formed planets at variable distances. Saturn's rings are supposed to furnish an example of what all planets originally were. The sun, therefore, stands in the relation of parent to the planetary bodies, which, in obedience to well-known laws, circulate about him. Commonly, we speak of eight planets, of which the Earth is one; but there are not fewer than a hundred and thirty-four to which names have been given, besides an incalculable number too small to be visible, but some of which, coming within the earth's attraction, fall as meteors. To all these we may add the sub-planets, which are held to have been thrown off from their primaries, as these were from the sun. At all events, it is as near certitude as possible, that the earth we inhabit is a morsel of the sun fashioned from glowing materials into that world

which is so well adapted to vegetable and animal life. In its internal heat and volcanos, it still bears traces of its condition when it parted company with the sun. Clothed in all its beauty, it might be pardonable to define it as only a cooling cinder, from which the heat of its solar parentage has not altogether departed.

One thing specially remains to complete the wondrous story of inanimate creation. We refer to the heat residing in the sun. How was it produced? This heat, in which our globe participates, had its origin in force. Particles of matter rushing into violent collision produce heat. A concentration of nebulae on a great scale, gave the sun that amount of heat which is still conserved for the benefit of the dependant planetary bodies. In whatever way heat is produced, it is ultimately to the sun that it is due. Every bit of coal was once a vegetable substance grown by the sun's heat, and this store of heat we disengage by fire to give us warmth, as well as to move machinery. The heat from an ordinary fire, therefore, is directly traceable to those tremendous forces which brought together the materials of the sun. But will not the conserved heat of this grand luminary be in process of time expended? Whether the sun's heat will ever die out, is a point shrouded from finite intelligence. As yet, there is no appearance of decay in the sun's beneficent energy, and we may be perfectly at our ease on the subject. W. C.

VISITS AT CONSTANTINOPLE.

SOME years ago, when residing at Constantinople, I, an English lady, made some rather amusing visits to two successive Persian ambassadors. The first of these personages was an old man of somewhat uncivilised manners and mode of life; the last one was a young, well-educated Persian, whose wife was one of the numerous daughters of the present Shah of Persia, Nasr-Eddin. My first visit occurred as follows: A young French lady, Madame G—, requested me to accompany her to the bazaar at Stamboul to choose a Khorassan shawl. A French gentleman, M. R—, went with us to interpret, as he spoke Turkish; but as the Persian merchants have the reputation of being terrible cheats, he proposed to request the secretary of the Persian Embassy, with whom he was acquainted, to be of the party. Accordingly, we stopped at a very dilapidated-looking house, in a remote quarter of Stamboul, which proved to be the Persian Embassy; and a young man appeared, dressed in European costume, with the exception of the high black lambskin cap worn by all the natives of 'Iraun.' This was Daoud Effendi, the secretary. He spoke French very well, having studied for some years in Paris; and he proceeded with us to the Persian khan, where his presence had certainly a more restrictive effect upon the merchants, for they did not ask above half the usual price for their shawls.

It was a very cold day in January; and, on leaving the bazaar, Daoud Effendi begged we would go and pay a visit to his chief, when we should have some hot tea. We hesitated, fearing it might be an intrusion; but he said the ambassador was very fond of receiving strangers; so we went. The Embassy was one of the old dismal wooden houses

to be found in the most ancient quarters of Stamboul; the rooms were large and desolate, covered with ragged matting, and empty of everything except divans. Daoud Effendi requested us to wait in one, while he went to announce us to the ambassador; and in a few minutes he returned, and ushered us into an adjoining room, at the further end of which was a divan, over which was thrown a magnificent Persian carpet, and upon it sat, cross-legged, an old man in the complete costume of 'Iraun'—the high cap of black lambskin, an open coat (dressing-gown shape) made of silk brocade (shawl pattern), dark trousers, coloured stockings, and shoes (not slippers) of varnished leather. He was smoking the short Persian pipe; his hair and beard were dyed of a bright brown with henna; but his face was old and wrinkled, and he had no teeth. He saluted us by putting his hand on his heart, and motioned to us to sit on the divan. He could speak nothing but Persian, and the conversation was carried on through the secretary, who apparently told him who we were and all about us. He asked us how we liked Constantinople, and whether we should ever go to Persia. We paid several highly-flown compliments to the Persians at the expense of the Turks, in true oriental style; and soon some servants entered, bearing trays made of wooden mosaic, with tumblers of transparent tea, looking like negus. It was delicious—with a delicate flavour of tea, lemon, sugar, and, I think, some spice. He asked us if it was not the nicest tea we had ever tasted, and we quite agreed that it was. Some bonbons were handed to us: one that I took was the rose-sugar sold about the streets there; but another, oh, horror! had tallow mixed with sugar! I hastily conveyed it to my pocket unperceived. We were curious to see the ambassador; but as it is considered very rude to mention their wives to orientals, we did not know how to manage it. At last M. R—— asked Daoud Effendi if he thought we could see the ladies. He said he could not ask it then; but if we could come another day, he would arrange that we should see them. After a little more desultory conversation, we took our leave, when the old gentleman asked us to come and see him again, which we promised to do.

Daoud Effendi having fixed the following Saturday for our next visit, we started again for Stamboul, taking with us an English lady who spoke a little Turkish, to interpret, as we thought it probable that either the ladies or their slaves would speak Turkish. The old gentleman received us, as before, sitting cross-legged on his carpet; and the hot tea and bonbons were served, after which he rose, and, taking me by the hand, and telling the other ladies to follow, he led us through another room to a small door in the wall, which he opened with a key, and disclosed a very narrow staircase. He preceded us down this, and entered a room which at first appeared full of boxes and bundles. He said something in Persian, and then turning to us, said, in French: 'Madame l'Ambassadrice.' I did not perceive a human being, until, going forward, I saw, lying upon a mattress on the floor, an old lady, who put me in mind of the gipsies one sometimes sees lying round their camps in unfrequented lanes in England.

'This lady is the interpreter,' he said, pointing to Mrs W——; and then he left us. This gipsy queen did not rise from her mattress, but signed to us to sit

beside her on a sofa, which we did, and Mrs W—— attempted some complimentary speeches, while we looked round the room. There were a great many bundles apparently of clothes, for, like the Turks, they use neither drawers nor wardrobes. There were also several curious-looking cases, apparently of basket-work, covered with skins, containing household goods; these were all round or oval, without any angles. The lady's dress was quite different to that of the Turkish women; it was made of the pretty soft brocaded Persian silk, like a silken Cashmere shawl. The body was loose, and open in front, shewing a white muslin handkerchief underneath. The skirt was full and short. She wore party-coloured stockings and leather shoes. Her head was tied up in a red checked cotton handkerchief, as if she had the toothache, and over the back of it was thrown a thick muslin veil. In a few minutes another lady entered, whom she introduced as her daughter; she appeared to be about thirty, but whether she was married or not, we could not make out. She was not good-looking, having very marked Persian features; the eyebrows very thick and black, and meeting over the nose. I presume that they consider this to be becoming, for I afterwards found that those whose eyebrows did not meet naturally, had them painted to appear as if they did. This lady, whose name was Amine, was very friendly, and talked a great deal, only we could not understand half that she said. She asked if we had any children. Mrs G—— and Mrs W—— had none, and I had only one daughter; which she said was a pity, and that we should pray for sons. She seemed to have an opinion of her own about our appearance and physical proportions. Soon came in a young girl of fourteen, with a baby in her arms. She looked so young that we asked if the baby was hers. They said yes, that she was another daughter, and her husband was ambassador somewhere. Her name sounded like 'Kettledrum.' She looked rather sad, and said her baby was ill; it had an abscess in the ear. It must have been very uncomfortable, poor thing, for it was swaddled up so tight that it was hard and stiff like a piece of wood, and its head was bound up in endless bandages. These two daughters were dressed in the same way as their mother, only the handkerchiefs round their heads were of white muslin; and 'Kettledrum' had a beautiful necklace of pearls, each bead as large as a pea; one end of it was fastened to each ear, and it hung down under her chin. Tea and Turkish coffee were brought in, and 'Kettledrum' fed her baby alternately with each, which peculiar food it took as if accustomed to it, though it could not have been more than six months old.

We observed that some of the female slaves who attended upon the ladies were of quite a different type of countenance, and their dress was not by any means the same as that of the Persians. We asked where they came from, and were told they were Arabs, from beyond Damascus. Their features were pleasing and regular, their faces rather long, and complexions fairer than those of the Persians; one of them was a very pretty girl about eighteen, and she seemed much pleased at our admiration of her. They wore dark flowing garments, which fell gracefully down to their feet, which were bare.

We asked what dress they wore in Persia when they walked out; and Amine immediately sent one

of the slaves for a walking-costume, which she put on to shew us. It was quite different from the Turkish women's outdoor costume, and consisted of very wide trousers, each leg separate, buttoned round the ankle, and fastened round the waist; then a large black stuff cloak was thrown over the whole person, head and all, except the face; but the latter was entirely covered by a piece of white linen, fastened above the forehead, and falling down to the waist. I asked how they could see or breathe; they said they breathed underneath it, and they shewed me that on a line level with the eyes, some small holes were worked in the linen, through which they could see pretty well; but as every woman wears a similar dress, and all black, it must be utterly impossible to distinguish one from another. The Turkish women, on the contrary, delight in wearing the brightest colours, and the veil, or yashmack, is of the thinnest muslin, and so disposed as to shew the profile in a most becoming manner, and the eyes are entirely unveiled. We asked to see some other dresses; and they opened some of the cases and bundles that were scattered over the room, and shewed us several. They were almost all of the same brocaded Persian silk; some coarser, and some very fine.

We prolonged our visit as much as we could, for the orientals consider it very unpolite to make a short visit, and then took our leave with as many compliments as we could put into Turkish, and assuring the ladies that we found them much more amiable and agreeable than the Turks; which was very true, for they appeared to possess a native politeness and kindness which I have rarely met with in a Turkish harem. They begged us to come and see them again, and so did the ambassador, when we took leave; but we were destined never to meet any of them again, for a short time afterwards I heard that the old gentleman had returned to his own country, and had been succeeded by another ambassador.

Some months after this, I was invited with Lady H—— and Mrs W—— to visit the new Persian ambassador and his wife; they had only just arrived, and their house was hardly in order; but as Lady H—— was shortly to leave for England, she did not like to postpone the visit. We heard that he had taken a beautiful palace at Fondoukli, near Pera, the Frank quarter of the town. By some mistake we missed M. R——, who was to have accompanied us, and Lady H——'s cavass, who attended us, did not know the way, and led us up one steep hill and down another till we were fairly tired. We inquired several times for the 'Ajem Eltehi' (Persian ambassador), whom no one seemed to know, till at length I espied a tall black curly cap, which was evidently from 'Iran', and its wearer proved to be one of the 'Ajem's' servants. We had passed the house a long way, and had to retrace our steps. At last we arrived, and entered a large open gate, after which we had to ascend thirty steps, which brought us into a paved court, surrounded with orange-trees in full flower. A wide terrace paved with small black and white stones arranged in a pattern, surrounded the house, on three sides of which was a garden. We were shewn into a large room, painted in the Turkish style, with a colonnade at one end, crystal chandeliers, and Bohemian glass lamps. There were some handsome Persian mosaic chairs, and some French

damask ones, and, of course, a divan along one end of the room. The secretary soon appeared, not our old friend, Daoud Effendi, but a handsome young man about twenty-eight, speaking French like a Parisian. We heard afterwards that he was a Christian, and was shortly to be married to the daughter of a rich Armenian merchant. The view from this room was magnificent: the house is built on the heights of Fondoukli above Tophann, looking down upon the Sultan's palace on the left; and on the Golden Horn and the Seraglio Point on the right; but the cliff is so steep, that one seems to be right over the Bosphorus; and yet there are houses upon every foot of ground sloping downwards, where they would look down each other's chimneys, if they had chimneys, which they have not.

In a few minutes the ambassador entered, a dark, gentlemanly, little man, in Persian uniform, with the inevitable high black cap. He speaks French very well, having been some months at Paris; and a little English, learned in India. He received us with great cordiality, and said it was extremely kind of us to pay him a visit; but he deeply regretted that the princess, his wife, would not be able to receive us on that day, as she had heard, on the previous evening, of the death of one of her sisters. I had been informed, by no less an authority than the French ambassador, that the Shah of Persia had four hundred daughters, and that this lady was one of the four hundred, so I felt inclined to say I hoped the 399 remaining sisters were all well, and we regretted that she should be so much grieved at the loss of one amongst four hundred, but perhaps she was a favourite sister! We were certainly disappointed, and I feared Lady H—— would not be able to see her; however, he said he hoped we would return some day on the following week, when the princess would be charmed to see us; and at that moment she sent a slave to say how much she regretted not being well enough to receive us. The ambassador then conversed most agreeably on the country and people, and spoke of St Petersburg, where he had passed some time. He said the princess found it very dull here, as the Turkish ladies were so ignorant, few of them knowing how to read or write, and could not be any society for her. 'But,' he added, 'the Turks are anxious to improve, and they have begun by attempting a revolution.' This was a short time after the conspiracy which was discovered at Constantinople to dethrone the Sultan and form a constitutional government. M. R——, who had by this time arrived, said that one of the chiefs of the conspirators had frequently said to him that he regretted not being able to read French, in order to study the history of the great Revolution, and he had made M. R—— repeat several times the principal events of that terrible time, with every detail relating to it. The servants now brought in tumblers of hot tea, Turkish coffee in beautiful Sèvres china cups, iced sherbet, and preserves. I said we found the Persian tea delicious, as we had tasted it at the late ambassador's. He seemed quite disgusted to hear we had visited the old gentleman, and pronounced him decidedly vulgar. He then took us into the kiosk, a pretty sort of greenhouse, with orange-trees and other shrubs all round, and a fountain playing, which sounded very sweet. There was a divan at one end, upon which we took our seats, and they brought the ambassador a chibouk, the neck of which was

set with beautiful brilliants and emeralds: he said the pipe was worth about 80,000 francs. After partaking of some more tea, we took our leave, the ambassador begging us to return on the Tuesday. Accordingly, we did so, and this time we saw the princess. She was a young girl about sixteen, with the characteristic Persian face, the eyebrows meeting over the nose. She had a pleasant smile and agreeable manner; and by way of being especially polite, she had sent for cakes and ices to the Italian pastrycook's at Pera, with two French girls to hand them. She meant it very kindly; but we would much rather have had a Persian collation, with her own slaves to wait upon us. The princess was dressed like the other Persian ladies, only the costume was of rich French silk, and she had some handsome diamond pins stuck in the handkerchief on her head, and lovely rings. She spoke a little French, and said she was learning it as fast as she could, shewing us her French grammar and dictionary—but she found it terribly dull at Fondoukli—'Bien, bien triste!'—and she thought she could not remain there much longer, away from all society, for the Turkish women she found 'insupportable, et si curieuse, et si lègère!'

We did not remain long, as we had been told she was going for a drive. She took leave of us very kindly; and we never saw her again, for, a few months afterwards, we heard that the ambassador had been obliged to send her back to her own country, as she was quite wasting away with the *mal du pays*.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER XVIII.—MARRIED.

PERHAPS after all, the one great social advantage which people who live in a city like London possess is, that, if they please, they can avoid gossip. Tale-bearing and tittle-tattle, if not absolutely unknown in the metropolis, only exist as some tropical plants may grow amongst us, dwarfed and stunted, with no power to range; whereas in our smaller towns they attain gigantic proportions and a luxuriant vegetation. Even in the heart of the country, the chief talk is about individuals—the parson's tendency to drink, the squire's meanness, the parish doctor's abominable profligacy. But in the country town it is scarcely too much to say that there is no other talk. In our 'centres of industry,' such as Hilton, there are several circles of society, which (unlike those of Euclid) cut, but do not touch one another, so that each scandal revolves in its own orbit. If John Milbank had been in a lower grade, or Maggie in a higher, their affairs would now have been discussed only in one circle, that of the second-class manufacturers, or of the skilled mechanics; but as it was, they were very freely canvassed in both. Moreover, Richard's connection with the *Sans Souci* club brought these young people under the notice of a still higher section of society. Nay, the very lowest strata of the population were also linked with their fortunes through the medium of the child (William Grey it had been christened) in Poulter's Alley, whose nurse had her own visiting-

list, we may be sure, though she had no particular day for receptions; so that the news of their engagement might almost be termed the topic of the town. It was received with great disfavour by all parties. The women of his own class were furious that John Milbank should 'let himself down' to marry a girl who was little better than a mill 'hand.' They had been informed by their fathers and brothers what a head for business he had, and how certain he was to succeed in it, and become a rich man; and they had never quite given up the hope of his eventually getting 'civilised'—or, in other words, of his choosing a wife from among his equals. It had been all very well for Richard, who was going to the dogs, and sure to drop out of 'society,' at all events, to have cast his wayward affections on such an object; but in John's case it was simply disgraceful. This 'young person,' if common report was to be believed, was not even respectable; for what was that horrid story about a baby in Poulter's Alley, and Mr Dennis Blake? It was enough to bring old Matthew Thurle from the grave to see his model nephew behaving in such a fashion. However, model or not, Mr Milbank's tastes had been always low. His brother had made an effort to get into better society, though the result might not have been very successful; whereas, John had made none. There were other ways of being lost besides squandering your money away on cards or horses. And, 'mark their words'—this was the finale of all discussions upon the subject—'nothing good would come of it: an unequal marriage flies in the face of Providence, and, sooner or later, is certain to bear its own punishment. Time would shew. The women, contrary to custom in such cases, were not so irate with Maggie as with John; and, of course, the anger of the men was concentrated upon the male sinner.

At the *Sans Souci* club, where Richard, since his absence, had become more popular, perhaps, than before, he and John were now likened by Mr Roberts to Charles Surface and his brother. John was a hypocrite, a humbug: had been scheming to get the girl for himself all along, and had probably sent Richard out of the way for that very purpose. The man that had bricked up his cellar was not such a fool as they thought he was. If he had been a genuine teetotaler, he would, of course, have destroyed the wine, which was simply now becoming more valuable every day. He was not so much an ascetic, it seemed, as a miser. This pretty girl was not to be envied, nor, perhaps, even to be congratulated on having escaped her first lover. And was he her first lover, or had not John himself been secretly the accepted swain all along? The child in Poulter's Alley might be a young Milbank, and yet not Richard's son—eh! And what a row there would be when Richard came back and found this alteration in the programme! Or had he been 'squared' by John himself? It was a pity that fellow Dennis Blake had just had to leave the club—not, of course, on his own account, for it was a good riddance—but because he might

have had some information to give upon this interesting topic. Upon the whole, what a queer affair it was! and yet not so strange as it might turn out to be when all came to be known.

Of all this talk, the two principal personages concerned were for the present profoundly ignorant. Maggie, though now and then sick at heart with thinking of the days that were no more, did not in the main repent of having promised her hand to John. She was well content to see her father mending and in such good heart, for, indeed, the news from Rosebank had had the effect upon him of a cordial upon a sinking man. He was too wise to overwhelm her with congratulations, far less with boastful allusions to what had been his own advice from the very first; but it was plain that he thought her the luckiest of girls, and of course that all the more, since the probability of such good fortune had seemed to him exceedingly small. Nor was it only prudence that prompted him to be thus silent. Love had taught him that it was chiefly for his own sake that Maggie had accepted John, and that, however his eyes might view it, it was in fact a self-sacrifice on her part; and though he felt that it must turn out to her advantage, he was not less grateful to her for what she had done. An opportunity presently occurred of shewing that he too, for his daughter's sake, could accept an undesired position. It was significant of the condition of her state of feeling with respect to her future husband that Maggie spoke of him to her father quite unreservedly, even to the discussion of his character, about which, however, they were pretty well agreed.

'There is one thing, father,' said she, 'which I should like to see arranged before my marriage, and which, I fear, will trouble John—I mean about little Willie.'

The engraver was not unprepared for this allusion to Richard's child; he thought she was about to propose that some provision should be made for the infant, which, indeed, it seemed only right should be done.

'I am sure, my dear, that John will do his duty by the poor boy, if it were but for Richard's sake, and even though you had not personally interested yourself in the matter.'

'But I must have the child near me; be permitted to see him whenever I please: I promised his dying mother to take her place with it. Besides,' added she, with sudden frankness, 'it is all that belongs to Richard which I shall ever see.'

'My dear Maggie, that is a strange thing even for me to hear you say; and I am sure it would have distressed John beyond all measure. I hoped—I did most sincerely hope—that you had got over your misplaced affection, and that in making this wise choice'

'Choice!' interrupted Maggie bitterly: 'a woman chooses but once, father, as she loves but once. If Richard were to return to-day, to-morrow'

'Heaven forbid!' muttered the old man, 'until at least my daughter is John's wife.'

'It would make no difference, so far as this marriage is concerned; fear not for that; but I cannot, and I will not, leave his child to hireling hands. Do you think that John would very much object to have little Willie at Rosebank?'

'I think he would,' answered the engraver gravely; 'and especially if he guessed the reason for your wishing it. He would not perhaps oppose

it, but the proposition would be most distasteful; and if ever you and your husband should fall out—as wives and husbands will do—it would rankle in his mind.'

Maggie sighed, and one little foot moved hither and thither, tracing out the pattern on the carpet, as it had once traced Richard's name, when she was crossed before.

'Why should not I keep Willie?' said the engraver presently.

'You, father! What difference would that make, since you will live with us at Rosebank?'

This had been tacitly agreed upon by all three; John, indeed, had spoken of it to Maggie as an understood arrangement, and they had settled together the room which the old man was to occupy, as best adapted for his work; while he himself, though he had not absolutely closed with their offer, was secretly delighted with it: he would still be under the same roof as his dear Maggie; there was the garden—and he delighted in a garden, for which that little parterre on the leads was but a poor substitute—and he could now pursue his employment, and bear his share in the expenses of the household, the same as if at home. Now this bright dream was shattered, and he must do his best to appear as though he had never dreamed it.

'No, Maggie; a man should live in his own house as long as he can keep a roof over his head,' said he decisively. 'John is very kind in wishing me to make my home at Rosebank; but man and wife get on better together when left to themselves. A resident father-in-law—here he forced a smile—'may not be so bad as a resident mother-in-law, but there are still objections to him; not from your side of the house, of course, my darling. No, no; I shall stay here at the old place; and when you are gone, there will be plenty of room in it for the child and his nurse, and then I shall be sure of your coming to see me every day, if it were only for Willie's sake.'

He could not help that little touch of bitterness, and it did not mend matters that she took it in serious earnest, and not as the reproof for which it was intended.

'O father!' cried she, 'do not say that. As if I could put little Willie, or—anybody in the world, before yourself! It would certainly get over every difficulty, if you would consent to take the child; and if you really are resolved not to live with us—though I had taken for granted that you would do so, and was so depending on it'—

She kissed him tenderly, by way of finish to the sentence, which, perhaps, she did not find it easy to conclude in words. In her secret heart, she was glad—quite independent of the proposition with regard to the child—that her father had resolved to remain in Mitchell Street. When John was away, she would then be quite alone, and able to indulge in her own thoughts: her sorrows, as she imagined, would not be such as would be lightened by sympathy, nor, if they had been, would she have found it in her father. Solitude, as she conceived, would be absolutely necessary for her to recruit her strength and jaded spirits, after the effort which the society of John would demand of them. This reflection occurred to her, not so much on her own account, as on that of John himself, to whom she felt all was due that she could pay. And also with respect to her father, it had already struck her what pain she would be giving the old man, if she

should be unable to conceal from him that she was wretched in this marriage, upon which he had built such hopes, and which, he must be aware, she had contracted for his sake, and not her own. For a few hours every day, she could wear a mask of cheerfulness; but dwelling under the same roof, and a constant witness of her behaviour, it would be impossible that he should be thus deceived.

It is certain, indeed, that of the two, John Milbank regretted the engraver's refusal to live at Rosebank more than Maggie herself. He really liked the old man, and had thought, besides, that her father would have been a companion to his wife during the long hours in which he was engaged at the works; but perceiving, from her manner—of which he was a very keen and tender observer—that the arrangement suited her wishes as it stood, he made no attempt to alter it. As to the child, it was true he did not offer it a home at Rosebank, but he privately consulted with his future father-in-law as to whether he himself, as Richard's brother, should make provision for its maintenance, or whether, in his judgment, Maggie would prefer to do so as heretofore; and when Herbert Thorne replied, with a shrug of the shoulders, that it was Maggie's wish to support the child herself, John affecting, like him, to treat the matter as a benevolent whim of hers—though the whole affair was as clear to him as it had been made to Thorne, and pained him to the quick—merely said: 'Then we must increase the pin-money.' And thereupon made so large an allowance to Maggie as would not only defray whatever expenses she might be put to on Willie's account, but would enable her, if need were—though the old man was now getting once more into work again at his own calling—to assist her father also. Indeed, if the young ladies of his own class had known 'the figure' at which John Milbank thus estimated the 'outgoings' of his future wife, they would have repented having missed him, and grudged his bride her luck more bitterly than ever. But as for Maggie, without being ungracious, she seemed scarcely alive to her good-fortune in this respect. 'It seems a good deal, John, but you were always generous,' was all the acknowledgment she made of his liberality. The fact was that, for the present, she could not bring her mind to bear upon such details at all. The arrangements for her approaching marriage, the alterations and improvements suggested at Rosebank, had little or no interest for her, and had it not been for Martha Linch, who, though having failed in her own little scheme of matrimony, took the greatest delight in forwarding the marriages of others, it is probable that her wedding-day would have found her in a very unprepared and ordinary state with respect even to wardrobe. Perhaps a *trousseau* purchased out of money borrowed from the man one is going to marry, lacks the charm of other *trousseaux*; and possibly, with all her humility, Maggie felt within herself that no price could be too high that was purchasing her body and soul, notwithstanding that she had voluntarily consented to the bargain. Are wedding-gifts, and ample settlements, and liberal pin-money, often accepted in this thankless manner, I wonder, or is the notion of 'marrying for love' so out of date, that gifts are no longer valued for the sake of the giver, but by a more practical standard?

At all events, Maggie had all she wanted, in a material sense, and was envied above measure, accordingly, by all young persons of her own sex. It was evident that John was resolved to spoil her, and that is a process of deterioration which bride-elects are generally very willing to undergo. In one thing only did Maggie's engagement seem to be deficient—that blissful epoch called the honeymoon was to be spent by the happy pair at Rosebank, instead of, as usual, in flitting from lake to lake among the northern hills, or in basking on the Undercliff in the Isle of Wight. Business was so pressing just now at Hilton, that John 'really did not feel himself justified,' he said—unless, indeed, Maggie should express a marked preference for any particular spot—in leaving home at present; and as Maggie was quite indifferent to the matter of locality—for when one is to be sold, what does it signify whether it is at Christie's or Foster's!—thus it was arranged. This departure from precedent was, perhaps, taken in worse part by society at large, as respected the bridegroom, than anything he had done before. 'It was all his meanness,' said the members of the *Sans Souci*, who, from the contrast which the reports of his prudence afforded to the lavishness of which they had been the spectators in his brother's case, did honestly believe that John was mean; and even Martha Linch remarked, that she thought Maggie would have had more spirit than to have consented to this stay-at-home arrangement of John Milbank's, since a honeymoon at one's husband's house was really no honeymoon at all.

CHAPTER XIX.—A FORBIDDEN SUBJECT.

It was remarked of Maggie, on the day of the wedding, that, notwithstanding her bridal attire and her beauty, she looked like a sober married woman already. It was not that she had what is termed a matronly air, but the sweet confusion, that befits a bride, was somehow wanting. There was a yearning in her face when it was turned towards her father, and a smile reflected in it, though somewhat sadly, his own well-pleased glance; but when she turned towards her husband, her look was cold, though gracious. No expectancy of a bright future lit up her large dark eyes; no gentle tremors quickened the rise and fall of her fair bosom. She had once looked forward to her marriage-day with as proud thoughts and happy dreams as any other maiden well-beloved, but not to this one. At the very moment when she breathed the words that made her this man's for life, she thought of Richard; and when John placed the ring upon her finger, she remembered with a sharp pang the last time that a ring had there been placed, and by whose dear hand. She could not help these feelings, nor did she wrong her husband by them; they were born of associations that were too strong for her, to ignore. Maggie's thoughts were not unworthy of an utterly good woman.

The next day, John was at his office, and Maggie walking alone in her garden at Rosebank. That spot had been especially dear to her, as we have said, and it was her duty to efface its dearness: to accustom herself to it, under other conditions. It had been changed by John, perhaps with some secret view to this; here was a new arbour, here a flower-plot that had not been of yore. Before the windows

of the little drawing-room, a fountain played. In the tool-house, she found hoe and rake and spade fit for her own small hands, and for no other's. Within the house were tokens everywhere of her husband's provident devotion. She had never dropped a wish—long forgotten by herself, and uttered in the childish days when one is given to wishing—for this or that, but that for which she wished was there awaiting her. Whomsoever she had preferred, she could not deny to her own heart that the man who preferred her above all women, was he who had won her for his bride; nor did she attempt to deny it. She was thankful for these things, not in themselves, but because each was an argument in her husband's favour, and strengthened her in her resolve to be worthy of his love. A little boudoir had been fitted up for her above the sitting-room, and looking out upon the garden, and up to which came, 'like the voice and the instrument,' the breath of the roses, and the music of the fountain; in it was a book-case, stored with volumes chosen by one who knew her taste better than she did herself. But what touched her most, and for which she gave her husband credit, was, that the room itself was what it was: a fairy transformation of 'the turning-room' where John had kept his lathes, and into which she had scarce ever before set foot. It would have been far more convenient, she knew, to have made this bower out of the adjoining room—once Richard's, which was to have been her father's, in case he had come to dwell with them. It was very, very tender in John not to have fitted that one up for her. At present, at all events, she felt that she could never have sat in Richard's room, which, indeed, she avoided like a Bluebeard's chamber. Mrs Morden's talk about him wounded her poor heart as though each word had been a knife. 'Well, my dear, it is better as it is, I'm sure: and Mr John, whom I have known ever since he was so high, will make the Best of Husbands to you, as he was the best of brothers; but there was something about Master Richard as made everybody love him in spite of themselves. Here's his room, look you, just as he left it, or thereabouts—for I had not the heart to alter it, except scrubbing and such-like, though Mr John, he said: "Let it be done up;" but he did not look after it himself, like the rest of the house, and so I just let it be. I seem to smell the dear lad's smoke about it still—he was always a-smoking—but that, I reckon, is fancy, for smoke don't hang, leastways in chintzes, for half the time as he has left us. Would you please step in?'

But Maggie had not stepped in, only stood at the door to cast a glance around it—to be photographed upon her heart, and gazed at with inward eye for many a day—and then had continued her tour of inspection elsewhere. 'The Best of Husbands.' Yes; that simple term, applied to John by his old housekeeper, was the fittest that could be found. As time went on, all folks that knew them used it; and before the year was out, it found an echo even in Maggie herself. In one way, he was more like a lover in his first days of courtship, than a husband, so reverential was he in his devotion to her; he treated her with a Sir Charles Grandison sort of courtesy, which was yet of quite another sort than mere exquisite politeness, being born of an intense admiration. The being he had lived for in vain for so many many years had not disappointed him—far from it—but even yet she

seemed to him something 'too bright and good for human nature's daily food.' If Maggie could have been spoilt, she was a lost woman. Even in the matter where she had expected opposition, she found none. It happened that bad weather set in, to which any husband might have objected to his wife's exposing herself, and yet she went every day without reproof to Mitchell Street, to see her father and little Willie. She had peremptorily refused the offer of a vehicle for that purpose, for she knew John was far from rich, and must have well nigh beggared himself to fill her home with all its luxuries; and one day, an especially inclement one, she had forborne to pay her usual visit. She did not tell him this, but he found it out without inquiry; he seemed to have an instinct which revealed all she did, or failed to do, or wished, or would avoid.

'Maggie, my darling, if you can't go up to see your father, we must bring him—him and little Willie' (it was the first time he had mentioned the child by name)—'to see you.'

She saw the effort that it cost him to make this simple speech, and came more nigh to loving him for having made it than she had ever done. But she was by this time as fully resolved that Willie should never come to Rosebank, as of old she had been desirous to have him. She did not wish 'the low beginnings of content' with her new home and life, to be trodden down by his little feet; nor to hear under that roof the prattle of a baby tongue that might remind her of a voice she would fain forget. The measured but tender accents of her husband were growing dear to her, though with another dearness than Richard's passionate tones had had; the continuous rain of his tenderness was finding its way through the mantle of indifference with which her first love's desertion had clothed her. She found herself replying with some heat to those who took John to task for this and that: for his habitual gravity, which even her awakening affection could not warm to geniality (he could be gracious as the sun, but never mirthful); and especially for his disinclination to leave home.

'Your husband wants shaking up, my dear,' Martha Linch would sometimes observe, as if he were a bottle of colchicum, 'and will mope himself to death, unless you make him take a holiday. Why, he has never stirred from Rosebank, I do believe, since his——' Well, I don't know how long,' added Martha, flushing like a peony at the thought of how near she had been to talking of that catastrophe of Richard's disappearance.

'John is much better, thank you,' would be Maggie's stiff reply, 'than he has been for months.' This was quite true; it seemed that in winning his wife, he had won back all his health, and nearly all his wholesome handsome looks. 'As to taking a holiday, he is never so happy as when he is at his work, which, moreover, requires constant supervision.'

'Oh, I am sure of that,' returned the old maid, not a little terrified by Maggie's tones, and anxious for conciliation: 'everybody says that he is a host in himself in business matters; and then this beautiful place—quite a palace, I'm sure—must have cost him a mint of money, which, as I always say, ought to excuse him from entertaining his friends at present—though, doubtless, that will come all in good time.'

'If anybody complains that my husband is not

hospitable, they are finding fault with me, and not with him. If I wished to ask half Hilton to dinner, he would let me do so; and as for leaving home, I, for my part, can fancy no prettier spot than Rosebank anywhere.'

It was right in Maggie, and very characteristic of her, to take the blame—if blame there was—upon her own shoulders; but, as a matter of fact, though she had no more desire for 'seeing company' than John had, nor wish to leave her home, she did think that a temporary change of scene, and absence from his office, might do John good. He shrank from society, and had a dislike to travel—even so much as to a trip to London—which was positively morbid. Whenever she had somewhat urged him to this effect, his answer had been a quiet: 'We will go if you wish it, Maggie;' which for him was a very strong negation, since everything else that she might be supposed to wish was done without her even mentioning the matter.

So far as the fact was known, public opinion at Hilton—represented chiefly by Maggie's contemporaries of her own sex, and by that coterie of veterans of the *Sans Souci* club who interested themselves in local scandal—resented Maggie's growing content with her position. It blamed her for not insisting upon the good wine at Rosebank, being set free from its prison, and dispensed for the public good. Richard's hospitality had been, no doubt, too prodigal; but it was monstrous that John Milbank, whose business, untrammelled by his late spendthrift partner, was bidding fair to take rank with the best in the town, should ask nobody to dine but his own father-in-law and such third-rate folk as Mr. Lynch, the lawyer-preacher, and the old maid his sister. The wine for these entertainments, it was currently reported, John absolutely purchased in the town, rather than break into the repository which in a moment of passionate chagrin he had built up. Mr. Roberts, remembering the flavour of that good old port which still remained there, mourned for it as for some fair nun, who, under a false accusation of frailty, had been bricked in by an ascetic prioress. The improvement in John's fortunes naturally made him enemies, and these did not scruple to revive the old slander, that he had himself found means to rid himself of the unfortunate Richard; he had taken advantage of his pecuniary necessities to buy him out of the factory, and when he had thus secured his absence, he had married his lady-love. It took a long time for these cruel and infamous reports to filter through the various strata of society that discussed them, and to reach Rosebank; but, in the end, Maggie—thanks to Mrs. Morden, for whom she had, unhappily, purchased an ear-trumpet—came to hear them.

John's traducers would perhaps have held their tongues, could they have foreseen the effect their slanders produced upon her. Instead of setting her against her husband, they made her his partisan; and when a woman takes up the cudgels for a man, the embracing of his cause generally ends in her embracing the man himself. Moreover, the very offence that was imputed to him, knowing it, as she did, to be utterly false and undeserved, was of advantage to his cause; it compelled her to reflect upon the subject which she had hitherto avoided as too painful to be dwelt upon, and, to her surprise, discovered that the wound which she had thought to be so tender had in the meantime

somewhat healed. She could now think of Richard and John together, not, indeed, in the way of contrast—which, for Richard's sake, nothing would have induced her to do—but with a calm understanding of their relative positions to one another. She had at one time shut her ears to all that her father had urged against her former lover: how he was squeezing his generous brother dry, and sapping the credit of the house of old Matthew Thurle, of which they were the sole representatives; but the very existence of the present ill-feeling towards her husband shewed that these things had been true. John had clearly had from the first the strongest reasons for avoiding partnership with his brother, since he could not but have foreseen—as every one, indeed, had done—what a millstone he would have been about his neck in the way of business; yet so far from doing this, he had warned him of what would happen should he absent himself from his uncle's funeral, and thereby not only lost half the fortune that would have been all his own, but had endangered the remainder; and when the mischief was done, how patiently had he borne all the wrong that Richard had wrought him: the slights at home, the sneers abroad, and the heavy losses that had gone nigh to destroy the business in which he took such pride, and worked so hard to aggrandise. What, then, could be more false and wicked than to accuse John of having schemed to oust his brother from the partnership! As to herself, she could bear witness how carefully he had avoided any word that might suggest to her that he was a rival with Richard for her hand, notwithstanding—as she now knew well—that he had adored her in secret all along, with a love so tender and yet so strong as must be rare indeed with men, and which she took shame to herself that it was not in her power to return in kind.

To convince these slanderers by argument, she knew to be impossible; but might they not be silenced by some irresistible fact? Her dream was that, somehow or other, the brothers might be reconciled; that Richard, wherever he was, might be induced to give some sign that he was not at feud with John. It was most unreasonable of him that he should be so, except upon her own account; and even upon hers—neglected, forsaken, nay, cruelly deserted as she had been by him (she put out of sight, though, alas, not out of mind, his faithlessness, for of *that*, he might perhaps imagine her to be ignorant)—how could he affect to be a wronged or injured man? She had never feared his reproaches: even when standing at the altar, had Richard suddenly confronted her, she would have stood her ground, and denied all fealty to him. He had himself played the traitor, and broken bonds between them; but now, for her husband's sake, so strongly had his devotion worked with her, she wanted more than Richard's non-interference—it was her hope to secure his acquiescence in her marriage. Her eyes were opened, even more widely than she confessed to herself, to his true character; and she felt that it was possible to make it worth Richard's while to make some public avowal that John had not done him the wrong that rumour ascribed to him. In order to accomplish this, it was necessary, in the first place, to consult John himself upon the matter; and this first step, though the least difficult, was the most embarrassing to her of all; for up to this moment, and she had been married now

for more than a year, her husband and herself, as if by tacit consent, had avoided all reference to his lost brother. He had never mentioned Richard's name to her, nor she to him.

PROGNOSTICATIONS BY LEECHES.

THAT there is a sensitiveness to atmospheric changes in the leech, is generally admitted; and the idea of utilising this little creature as a sort of weather-glass arose long ago, we have evidence, in one of the early volumes of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. A correspondent of that venerable journal stated that if a leech be kept in a phial or bottle, partly filled with water, it will indicate approaching changes in the weather. He placed on a window-ledge an eight-ounce phial containing a leech and about six ounces of water, and watched it daily. According to his description, when the weather continued serene and beautiful, the leech lay motionless at the bottom of the phial, rolled in a spiral form. When it began to rain at noon, or a little before or after, the leech was found at the top of its lodging, where it remained until the weather became settled. When wind was approaching, the leech galloped about its limpid habitation with great liveliness, seldom resting until the wind became violent. When a thunder-storm was about to appear, the animal sought a lodgment above the level of the water, displayed great uneasiness, and moved about in convulsive-like threads. In clear frost, as in fine summer weather, it lay constantly at the bottom; whereas, in snowy weather, like as in rain, it dwelt at the very mouth of the phial. The observer covered the mouth of the phial with a piece of linen cloth, and changed the water every week or two. He seems to have had faith in the correctness of his own observations and conclusions; but went no further in the attempt at explanation than to say: 'What reasons may be assigned for these movements, I must leave philosophers to determine; though one thing is evident to everybody—that the leech must be affected in the same way as the mercury and spirit in the weather-glass; and has doubtless a very surprising sensation, that change of weather, even days before, makes a visible alteration in its manner of living.'

This leech-philosophy appears to have had many believers in the last century. In a letter to Lady Hesketh, dated 1789, Cowper wrote in one of his (too-rare) cheerful moods, and among other gossip said: 'Mrs Throckmorton carries us to-morrow in her chaise to Chicheley. The event must, however, be supposed to depend on the elements, at least on the state of the atmosphere, which is turbulent beyond measure. Saturday it thundered, last night it lightened, and at three this morning I saw the sky red as a city in flames could have made it. I have a leech in a bottle that foretells all these prodigies and convulsions of nature. Not, as you will naturally conjecture, by articulate utterances of oracular notices, but by a variety of gesticulations, which here I have not room to give an

account of. Suffice it to say, that no change of weather surprises him, and that, in point of the earliest and most accurate intelligence, he is worth all the barometers in the world. None of them all, indeed, can make the least pretence to foretell thunder, a species of capacity of which he has given the most unequivocal evidence. I gave but sixpence for him, which is a great more than the market-price; though he is, in fact, or rather would be, if leeches were not found in every ditch, an invaluable acquisition.'

The celebrated Dr Jenner did the leech the honour of embalming him in verse, as one among a singularly large group of weather prognosticators. The doctor declined an invitation because

The hollow mists begin to blow,
The clouds look black, the glass is low,
The scot falls down, the spaniels sleep,
And spiders from their cobwebs creep.
Last night the sun went pale to bed,
The moon in haloes hid her head,
The boding shepherd heaves a sigh,
For see—the rainbow spans the sky;
The walls are damp, the ditches smell,
Closed is the pink-eyed pimpernel;
Hark how the chairs and tables crack!
Old Betty's joints are on the rack;
Loud quack the ducks, the peacocks cry,
The distant hills are looking nigh;
How restless are the snorting swine!
The busy flies disturb the kine;
Low o'er the grass the swallow wings;
The cricket, too, how loud he sings.

And so on, for forty or fifty lines, crowded with folk-lore concerning weather-warnings: ending with

The leech, disturbed, is newly risen
Quite to the summit of his prison.

Dr Merryweather (not a bad name for a weather-prophet) stated, in a pamphlet published in 1851, that these lines by Dr Jenner first suggested to him the prosecution of a series of experiments on the behaviour of the leech under the influence of atmospheric changes. He noticed, in the neighbourhood of Whitby, that if the leech was restless in calm fine weather, a storm was coming; this, at anyrate, was the inference which he drew from a number of observations. He procured twelve white glass bottles, seven inches high by three in diameter, of one pint capacity. He put one leech in each, and so arranged the bottles that the leeches could 'see each other,' perhaps that they might agree among themselves to make a grand united demonstration. A metal tube ascended from the mouth of each bottle, of such diameter that the leech could not easily enter it, but might do so if he determined on it. No fresh air could enter the bottle except through a small orifice in the tube. All the tubes were varnished inside, to facilitate cleaning. If a leech climbed up into his tube in the daytime, his movements might be watched by an observer; but how to know whether he had ascended during the night, and gone down again? An ingenious bit of apparatus was devised, to enable or compel each leech to register his own movements. A small

bell was elevated above the middle of the apparatus, and twelve little hammers around it; a gilt chain, descending from each hammer, passed round a pulley attached to a disk just above the bottle; across the lower end of the tube was a small piece of whalebone, held up by a bit of wire attached to its centre; this wire passed through an aperture in the top of the tube, and hooked on to the chain. Such being the mechanism, the action may be pretty easily comprehended: if the leech ascended, he dislodged the bit of whalebone, and caused the hammer to ring the bell. Supposing the observer to be in another room, and to hear the bell ring, he inferred that a particular change in the weather influenced the leech; and if two or more were set ringing at one time, the inference would be *pro tanto* stronger. This, we may remark, was not self-registering, as that term is usually employed in connection with scientific instruments; it signalled, but did not leave a permanent record.

On microscopically examining a leech, Dr Merryweather considered that he could point to a particular part of the animal as the seat of sensitiveness to weather-changes; and carried away by his fancies, he declared that, leeches are capable of affection; for after they become acquainted with me, they never attempt to bite me. Some of them have, over and over again, thrown themselves into graceful undulations when I have approached them: I suppose an expression of their being glad to see me.

Dr Merryweather described the mode in which he put his predictions to the test; but his definitions need not be gone into. There is no reason to doubt that his leeches *did* shew sensitiveness to the weather, or that he endeavoured to watch carefully the changes which supervened in the weather whenever any peculiar movements of the animals took place; but it is difficult to transform into definite language the relation which may appear to exist between the leech-movements and the weather-changes. His leeches do not seem to have been particularly sensitive to approaching rain; what they chiefly denoted was storm, another name for wind. Rain may be more important than wind in inland agricultural districts; but wind is more important than rain on the sea-coast, so far as concerns the safety of ships and of human lives. Dr Merryweather, as a physician and a resident at Whitby, had many means of knowing the destructive effects of violent winds on the Yorkshire coast; and hoped to make his prognosticator available for foretelling the approach of storms, gales, or winds from particular quarters. He even indulged a hope that the Admiralty or the Board of Trade might be induced to place such weather prognosticators at various places along the coast, to act as storm-warnings.

The apparatus which Dr Merryweather prepared for the Great Exhibition in 1851, was a stand of polished mahogany, about three feet in diameter by three feet and a half in height. Twelve leech-bottles were arranged in a circle on the base of the stand; while the tubes, chains, hammers, bell, &c. gave a kind of pyramid form to the whole. The Jury Report of the Great Exhibition stated that 'it is proposed to place a leech' in each glass; if this means that the leeches were not actually sent with the rest of the apparatus, we can readily understand why the jury offered no opinion as to the value of the invention.

AMY'S SWALLOW.

DEAD is Amy's friendly swallow—
Bird which dared no flight toward morn,
Till the sycamores were fallow,
And the reapers slew the corn,
And the ash was rod, or shorn.

Underneath her eaves he lingered,
All the full-leaved summer days,
Till the hazels bent brown-fingered,
And the grassy country ways
Winked, at eve, through rolling haze.

All his fellows had departed—
Flown abreast across the seas—
He, by wayward instincts thwarted,
Staid, to haunt her lattices—
Her gray porches—her sad trees.

Soon came winds afraught with sorrow,
Bee and bird alike to tame;
Dreary morrow chased to-morrow—
Dawns surcharged with storm and flame:
But for him no morrow came.

On the pent roof, balanced lightly,
Dolorous he watched the sun
In the east disclosing whitely—
Reddening till his span was run
With the sullen sunset gun.

Then, awaked to wild resistance,
To imprisoning of Fate,
Amy's swallow dared the distance
'Twixt him and his southern mate:
Amy's swallow dared too late!

For the cruel tempests brayed him—
Whirled him in their fierce unrest—
Blew him, dead, to land, and laid him
Close by the beloved nest
Which the spring suns charm the best.

Darling, could thy kisses waken
Purple lightnings in his eyes—
Plume those wings so rudely shaken,
Once again, with clarion cries,
He would speed through earth and skies.

Thy caresses, Pet, avail not.
Ah, if I should tempt the foam,
May my winging backward fail not,
Finding such a tender home
As the heart that mourns *his* doom.

Hapless swallow! Happy swallow!
Outcast guest of storm and sleet;
Many a mate of thine might follow,
Were he sure of bliss complete—
Dying at my lady's feet.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 538.

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 1874.

PRICE 11d.

THE BRADFIELD INUNDATION.

THE project of supplying large towns with water by means of ponds with artificial embankments, is in many cases attended with extreme danger to life and property. For this, there is a good reason. The construction of embankments to hem in a large body of water in a mountain valley, is an engineering work of great difficulty. The foundation may rest on ground not very secure, and no breadth or strength of materials can exempt the mass from being pressed on by water seeking its level. Besides, there is a constant risk of water-vermin perforating the embankment, and producing crevices, which lead to cracks, such cracks leading to sudden rents, whereby there ensues instant destruction. Wise are the cities which in preference, and where it is at all practicable, bring supplies of water from any great natural reservoir, as, for example, Glasgow supplying itself from Loch Katrine. To do so, the initiatory expense may be greater, but what signifies any reasonable though large expense in comparison to security, and insuring the permanence of a copious supply for generations to come. As any reasoning of ours, however, will have little avail with populations who would not mind any amount of insecurity to neighbours, in comparison to saving a penny or two per pound in the way of annual assessment, we take the liberty of giving some account of what occurred ten years ago by the bursting of the great artificial reservoir at Bradfield in Yorkshire.

The object was to supply water to Sheffield by damming up the small river Loxley and adjoining rivulets among the hills. The reservoir so formed, was situated about eight miles from Sheffield. This reservoir, begun in 1859, was intended to hold the drainage of four thousand three hundred acres, and to contain six hundred and ninety-one million gallons of water. It was nearly completed, but had not yet been used. The embankment, at the base, was four hundred yards long, five hundred feet wide, one hundred feet high, twelve feet wide at the summit, and about four hundred thousand cubic feet of material had been expended on it.

Friday, March 11, 1864, was destined to see the destruction of this costly and gigantic work. Heavy rains had swollen the streams, filling the reservoir almost to the brim. Still, all appeared safe. At length, in the course of that day, which was very stormy, a small crack was observed in the embankment. Mr Fountain, one of the contractors, pronounced the crack to have arisen from the water penetrating the inner puddle-wall of the reservoir, and so forcing the top forward. There was no danger—not a bit! He, however, at once despatched his son on horseback to Sheffield to Mr Gunson, the resident engineer, to inform him of the crack; and off through the darkness the young Yorkshireman dashed to the town. Mr Fountain and his men then set to work to open the valves of the outer pipes, to carry off the surplus water, which roared like discharges of cannon as it broke loose, and made the very ground tremble. After the pipes were thus relieved, no change was noticed in the crack, but one of the men fancied, through the darkness, that he observed that the water seemed lower on the inner side of the embankment than the ominous crack on the outer side. Between nine p.m. and ten p.m., however, the spectators, reassured, left the men with the lanterns quietly and busily at work.

At about ten p.m. Mr Gunson and Mr Craven, the contractor, darted through Darnlask, on their way to the reservoir, in a gig drawn by a fast horse. On their way they met frightened people, alarmed by the first mounted messenger, driving cattle up the hillsides, or carrying sick or infirm people in carts to a place of safety. They found the crack wide enough now to admit a man's hand, but they saw no danger, and even walked over the spot to examine the waste-weir. The water did not run over. Mr Fountain at once said: 'If we don't relieve the dam of water, there'll be a blow-up in half an hour.' They then prepared to blow up the weir by gunpowder; but the powder would not catch. Gunson and Swinden went back with lanterns to measure and see if the crack was above or below the water in the reservoir. As Gunson stooped with his lantern towards the end of the

crack, and then looked up, he saw, to his horror, a sheet of foaming white water rolling over the top of the embankment, and down into the crack. Still anxious to examine the valve-house, to see how much water was escaping, he crept cautiously down the slope of the embankment. But Swinden, cooler, and more alarmed, called out to his friend not to stay a moment in the valve-house. It was indeed time to flee, for at that moment, as Mr Gunson cast an ominous look upward, he saw an opening thirty feet wide in the embankment, and down came the water in a vast avalanche.

'It's all up. The embankment is going!' he cried to his friends; and the two ran across the embankment at full speed for their lives. Just then, the powder at the waste-weir blew up with a loud explosion. In a great deluge, the water followed the two men so fast, that Gunson began to forget himself; but his cooler friend dragged him out of its terrible path. In an instant, the chasm in the great earth-rampart gaped wider. The centre of the embankment crumbled away, and the vast flood of one hundred and fourteen million tons of water, now free to work out its hideous will, rolled on, an overwhelming avalanche, that no power could have staid, and swept down the valley, bearing away, with a roar like thunder, houses and mills as if they were haystacks—cattle, trees, and human beings as if they were flies. It was then exactly two minutes after midnight. A second terrific rush swept away the remainder of the embankment. The gap was one hundred and ten yards wide at the top, and opened seventy feet deep. In forty-seven minutes the reservoir was empty. The velocity of the flood was eighteen miles an hour, and, to use the forcible words of an eye-witness: 'Not even a Derby-day horse could have carried the warning in time to have saved the poor people down the valley.' For about three quarters of a mile the flood did no special harm, as there were few houses near the river; but it tore up trees, washed away banks, tore down huge rocks, carried away Annet Bridge, and destroyed roads. One block of stone, thirty-six feet long, weighing nearly sixty tons, was carried some distance.

The first house swept away was Annet House, a small farmstead. Mr Emmsall, the farmer, was sitting up waiting for a lodger; his wife, three boys, and another lodger, were in bed. A little before twelve, a pale-faced labourer rushed in shouting: 'It's coming! it's coming!' Emmsall instantly called up his household, and got them out, carrying their clothes on their heads. He also drove out a cow and two calves. Five minutes after, the flood came, and swept clean away the house, outbuildings, and garden, not leaving even a trace of them. Mr Gunson came up a moment before, and cried: 'The house is going! the house is going!' At Lower Bradfield, the destruction was overwhelming. Two stone bridges were destroyed; the school-house, a blacksmith's and wheelwright's shops were swept off, and two three-storied corn-mills, built with heavy stone basements, seemed suddenly to melt away. The very rock was torn up from under the foundations. Mr Joseph Ibbotson, an eye-witness, hearing the cry: 'The flood is coming!' leaped out of bed, looked out of window, heard the roar, and could just discern the rushing water. He ran out of the house to within twenty yards of the flood. The very

earth seemed rent asunder, as the water rushed on at race-horse speed. 'It seemed,' he says, 'as if some angry monster were lashing the hillsides, crumpling up buildings, and filling the air with a wrathful hiss; trees snapped with the sound of pistol-shots, houses staggered for a moment, then melted into the boiling torrent. In five minutes, the bridges, the three-storied mill, the school-house, and the master's house, vanished, and the flood, in its full majesty, rose a mighty wall of water, on a level with the roofs of three-storied houses. The large millstones and massive ashlar pillars of the Bradfield mill were not found for many days.' These curious facts were verified, and are vouched for, by Mr Samuel Harrison, who has written an excellent history of the flood.

It is quite certain, however, that many of the Bradfield people had previous inklings of danger. One of them, who went to see the crack (Mr William Ibbotson), returned home, and said to a neighbour, with true Yorkshire shrewdness: 'I can't learn that this cracking of a new embankment is a common thing. Danger or no danger, I don't go to bed. I shall keep my clothes on ready for off.'

Suddenly, a little before twelve, through the roar of the wind, Ibbotson heard apparently some drunken labourers shouting. But he listened again, then went out, and heard cries of 'It's coming! it's coming! Look out!' He instantly alarmed the neighbours, and helped them to escape.

The first victim soon met its doom. It was the child (only one day old) of Mr Joseph Dawson, the village tailor of Lower Bradfield. Dawson was awaked by his wife, who had heard some shouting. The man got up, ran to the window, and hearing the ghastly cry of: 'It's coming! it's coming!' darted into a back-room, and sent his brother with his eldest child to a friend's house on the hill. Thinking himself unable to carry his sick wife and new-born child, he asked a man he met at the door to help him. The man replied: 'You must run for your life, and save yourself. I have enough to do to save my own life.' The poor tailor then returned, and carried down his wife and child, wrapped in blankets. About twenty yards from the door, the flood met them, and knocked them down. Again, at his wife's direction, Dawson turned to the house, and just at the door the flood again struck them, and washed away the child. There was no time to think of the loss; the poor tailor pushed his wife up-stairs, just as the flood poured into the back and front of the house. The water rose six feet inside the rooms. Presently, Dawson's brother came with a ladder, and the man and his wife were carried across from an upper room to the hillside.

Mr Nicholls, the village schoolmaster of Bradfield, had a narrow escape. He had been to see the crack, and returned home reassured. Nevertheless, his wife was apprehensive, and would not go to bed. Five minutes before the flood came, the pair went out to the school-bridge, and thought there was no more water than usual. He then proposed to go to bed; but Mrs Nicholls threw on some coal, and refused to go to bed till the fire went out. They then walked to the window, and saw the water rising fast by the garden hedge. Just at that moment some one thundered at the door, and called out: 'Escape for your lives! the flood's coming!' Mr and Mrs Nicholls instantly

rushed across the road and up some steps into a hill-field. All at once, Nicholls, remembering he had left his overcoat in the house, in spite of his wife's screaming, ran back for it. It was a rash venture; Mr Nicholls could see the flood advancing yards high. The rash schoolmaster, however, snatched his coat, and rushed back up the steps, the spray of the foremost flood blowing in his face. A moment more, and he would have drifted dead upon the torrent.

The scene at Bradfield was extraordinary. It was like the end of the world, as the country people quaintly said. The whole population (those safe and those in danger) ran out in their plain night-clothes, and fled, shrieking and screaming, to the hills and upper fields. In the miller's house alone thirty people collected. In one cottage the family took refuge in the upper rooms, their escape being cut off. An infirm man, lodging in a lower room, stood for some time with the water nearly up to his mouth, but eventually succeeded in escaping up-stairs. A man named Hartley, who lived near the river, doggedly refused to leave his house. 'If it takes all I have,' he said to his imploring wife, 'it might as well take me too.' His wife then fled; but the flood did not, after all, quite reach the house. A farmer named Hawk was warned in time, and fled. Five minutes after, the flood swept his farm-house completely away, and one of the cows was carried five miles down the river to Hillsbro'.

Extraordinary escapes were very numerous, and the courage and promptitude shewn was, in many cases, remarkable. At Marsden's farm, called Rochester House, half a mile from Dam-flask, the water rushed suddenly into the house with the noise of thunder, and the lower rooms were instantly filled. Marsden, with quick resolve, broke a leg off the dressing-table, and knocked a hole through the roof. He then got out, drew up his wife and child, and carried them on to the hillside, which was nearly on a level with the roof. There were numerous other escapes of an extraordinary kind, which we have not space to notice. The cases of destruction to life and property were most afflicting.

At Malin Bridge the flood spent its utmost fury. Within the distance of one hundred yards, more than twenty houses were destroyed, and one hundred and two lives taken. Among stones, trees, and shattered machinery, rolled barrels, mattresses, dead cattle, and broken wagons. The roar of the flood resembled a thousand steam-engines letting off steam. At the same moment houses were falling, trees snapping, the wind was howling, and women and children were shrieking. At the left-hand side of the river a row of twelve cottages and two shops was washed away, and several families drowned. An infant was carried off by the water from her mother's arms, and the mother left dead among the ruins. One poor woman was standing at the door talking to the watchman, when the flood came down the valley. The watchman ran up the hill, and saved his life. The woman ran and closed her door, but was instantly drowned, and the house demolished. A man in this ill-fated row had a narrow escape. He, his wife, two children, and his wife's father, were washed down the flood. The wife and children were soon lost sight of, but the man

held on to a bulk of timber, and floated on to a heap of trees and debris that were piled up against a house. Calling out for help as he passed a window, he was pulled in, half-clad as he was, and almost exhausted; but his family all perished. In a detached house near this row twelve persons of one family were drowned. At the *Stag* public-house, at Malin Bridge, eleven persons were lost. The brother of the landlady had only just returned from Sheffield when he saw the flood approach; he ran to save his sister, the landlady of the *Stag*, when the water knocked him down on his back, and with difficulty he saved himself.

At the Limerick Wheel, a crinoline wire manufactory, damage was done to the extent of more than ten thousand pounds. There was only one man at work; he had gone home, but was suddenly sent back to soften steel for the next day's work. He met his death by the explosion of five furnaces full of molten steel, which burst in consequence of the flood generating steam. He was found several weeks afterwards buried under a heap of rubbish, scalded and frightfully disfigured. In a house at Hill Bridge, Robert Graham, his wife, and six children, were knocked into the water by a falling wall. Graham, by incessant exertion, managed to crowd the whole family upon a floating bed, and they were all eventually rescued.

At the *Mason's Arms* public-house, at the same place, four persons were drowned; a little niece, eight years old, alone escaped. She slept by herself in a top story above the water-line. All but the little corner of the house where the child's bed stood was swept away. When the neighbours woke her in the morning, she said she heard a noise in the night, and thought it was the gas blowing up. She heard her uncle and aunt go down, and cry for help, and then she fell asleep. At Bowe's Row, Hill Bridge, a man named Crooke, alarmed at the roar of the water, and the screams of his neighbours, jumped out of his bedroom window, in spite of his wife's entreaties, and died the next day from the bruises he received and the muddy water he had swallowed.

At Hillsbro' the destruction was almost as great. The water rose nearly eighteen feet, many houses were destroyed, the great stone bridge greatly damaged, and trees and stones were piled up across the road and against the front of the National School. It is said, on good authority, that a brick house, walls, roof, and floor entire, was carried down as far as the bridge, and held together some hours.

At Brick Row there were several extraordinary escapes. The owner, his wife, five children, a lodger, and an apprentice, were all drowned, and a man named Dyson alone escaped. He was sleeping in a top bedroom, and, hearing the roaring flood strike the building, he smashed a lath-and-plaster partition, got on to the joists, then broke through the slates, and got on to the roof, where he remained, cold and nearly naked, for two hours, till assistance arrived. In a house in front of Dyson's lived a man named Hides with his brother and sister-in-law. Hides had lit a candle, to see what was the matter down-stairs, when the flood cut the gable end of the house in two, and he nearly fell into the chasm. With a finger broken, and in the dark, he returned up-stairs to his family, who were screaming for help. The house was shaking dreadfully, and seemed about to fall. Hides,

wrenching off a bedpost, drove a way into the next house, and seeing the walls still rocking, he broke through four houses, followed by each family he met. In another house in the same row, two children were carried out of the window, and their bed with them; both children perished. Several other families perished in this row. In a hovel near this row, an old sailor was found floating about in a large box in which he had taken shelter.

The water penetrated into the married soldiers' quarters of the barracks, a little below Owlerton. The sentry had a narrow escape. Twenty yards of stone wall near the river was washed away. Paymaster-sergeant Foulds awoke by the flood breaking his windows. He looked out, and saw the foaming torrent carrying along the bodies of men and women, and something which was either a haystack or an entire house. Not having the remotest idea of an inundation, he exclaimed to his wife: 'I believe the world's breaking up!' The water outside the window was already twelve feet high. His wife was knocked down by the water, and the child's cot was swimming about the room. Worst of all, the door, pressed tight by the flood, would not open. After wrestling with it for some time, Foulds cried in a rage: 'I'm not going to be drowned like a rat in a hole, at all events'; and with a heavy fire-shovel he beat off the lock, and the door came open, the flood at the same time knocking him backwards. The sergeant then rescued his wife and infant, and carried them upstairs out of reach of the water. He then went back to save the two elder children, but could not force the door. Some soldiers, however, soon after arrived, and let out the water; but the children were both drowned.

A little further down the river, at the works of Messrs Marchington and Melin, two men working at the forge were surprised by the torrent. One man, named Simpson, mounted on a large boiler, and was carried off with it and its brick pillars, and drowned. His mate, a boy, clung to a beam, and was rescued. The boiler, thirty feet in length, was carried down nearly a mile.

At Neepsend Gasworks, the loss was tremendous. Retorts, boilers, and engines were torn up from the foundation. More than one thousand tons of coke and ten thousand feet of timber were carried away. On the banks of the river stood the cottage of a labourer named Ganuon. He and his wife and six children got on to the roof and screamed for help. Gradually the flood rose till it carried off the roof, and all clinging there for help instantly perished. In a cellar of an adjacent house were the three children of a poor man and his wife, who had gone to Wakefield to attend a funeral. The cellar filled, and the children were drowned in their sleep.

At the Eagle Works, Neepside, a poor woman awakened by the screaming of the pigs, got out of bed, and looking out, saw the flood. She instantly awoke her husband, and said: 'O John! the world's at an end!' 'Nay, my lass, it cannot be,' was the husband's reply. This couple were saved, just as they were thinking of taking to the roof.

An incident or two that occurred in the more immediate neighbourhood of Sheffield, must not be passed over. In Cotton Mill Row, near Alma Street, a poor old woman rushed out into the flood, and a young man in a story above,

seeing her in danger, let down a sheet; she caught it, and was pulled up; but just as she was within his reach, a rush of water carried her away, and she disappeared with a scream. At Bower Spring, a young man named Varney was riding through the water, when a piece of floating timber struck his horse. It threw him over its head, and he fell into the water and was drowned. When his body was found, both hands were clenched and raised before his face, as if he had died fighting.

The bodies, when laid out for identification, were strangely contrasted. Some had died as if in sleep; others seemed to have struggled to the last; their teeth were clenched, and they were torn and disfigured.

The inquiry at the inquest led to no special result. It was, however, proved that there were defective points in the construction of the embankment, and that there had not been sufficient means of rapidly letting off the water. A fair sum of money (fifty thousand pounds) was rapidly raised for the relief of the sufferers, and, to their great credit, the Sheffield workmen unanimously contributed a day's wages. The value of the mills, dwelling-houses, and other kinds of property destroyed was estimated at nearly two millions; and the number of persons who perished by the inundation was two hundred and fifty. Such, without reckoning minor inconveniences, was the result of trying to supply a town with water from an artificial reservoir. Those who, from parsimonious considerations, attempt projects of this kind, where there happen to be natural lakes at their disposal, incur no little responsibility, and may have much to answer for.

THE DANGEROUS CLASSES 'OUT WEST.'

UNLESS a large proportion of American local papers were carefully read, a very faint idea could be formed of the lawlessness of the border, and of more than the border. Nor, indeed, would the reading of any quantity of papers completely enable the dweller in an old country to arrive at a fair judgment of the state of things in new settlements; for many incidents, each of which would excite a whole county in England, are passed over as being too common to need remark; and sometimes are omitted through fear. Let me briefly relate what I happen to know of the state of things. To intending emigrants, the information may be useful.

The house in which I dwelt in New Mexico stands at the corner of what is intended to be a plaza, or square, and on the very ground it occupies, Cherokee Bill committed one of the most wanton of all his murders. This desperado—all the ruffians are styled 'desperadoes' in the West—although known by an Indian sobriquet, was a white man; and about half-a-dozen years back, he was crossing the plaza with my informant, when they met a total stranger, probably a teamster, who was going quietly about his business. To the surprise of his companion, Cherokee Bill said: 'I feel like shooting somebody to-day, and I should like to see this fellow kick'; and he shot him dead.

then and there. He was never molested for it; indeed, there was not at that time, and can hardly be said to be now, any one to notice such peccadilloes. In the natural course of events, Cherokee met his fate, as all such wretches do, after perpetrating an enormous amount of mischief.

The crimes, detection, or pursuit of horse-thieves and cattle-stealers, will always occupy a very prominent place in border records. On the frontier, indeed, it would be a trite remark to say that the killing a man was held a trivial offence compared to the stealing of a horse, and the latter is punished with far the greater certainty and severity. Two young men, who up to that time had borne very good characters, stole a couple of horses from a certain rancho or farm, and information being given which put the owners on the right scent, they were pursued. The pursuing party consisted of five men, all well known to myself, one being proprietor of a large tract of land, another a farmer, while the others were men in the employ of the first. They overtook the thieves about eighteen miles from the town where I lived, and as we had an 'alcalde,' or justice, they told the men they should take them into our place for trial. They all passed the night together very amicably, and started for the town in the morning. But the captors rode in by themselves, and explained, in the most nonchalant manner, that the men had tried to escape, and that they had been obliged to shoot them. They evidently did not intend to trouble themselves any further in the matter; but we sent a wagon up to the wild mountain-road they had been travelling, and there, where the torrent which ran for many miles by the side of the road, made a sweep, so as to give a broader expanse of ground than usual, the bodies were found. It was the most unlikely place for an attempt to escape; above and below the spot, the ravine, or cañon, which held the road and the stream was very narrow, and a desperate rider might hope to escape by dashing into the brush on the slope; but it seemed as if these prisoners, when trying to get away, had actually ridden their horses into the crescent formed by the bend of the river, just where there was no cover and no egress. Their captors declared, too, that as the prisoners would not stop, they fired after them. No surgical examination took place; a brief inquiry was held before the justice, who no more dared to convict, or send the men for trial, than he dared try to muzzle a tiger; and the decision was, that the prisoners met their death while trying to escape from justifiable arrest by an association in these parts.

This association is something absolutely unique. Texas is, as probably every one knows, the greatest cattle-raising state in the Union, and it is probably the most lawless place which was ever ruled, or pretended to be ruled, by a settled government. Very great injury is caused to the stockmen by what is termed the Comanche cattle-trade; those Indians 'running off' great numbers of cattle, and selling them to their white accomplices in New Mexico, who drive them into Colorado and Kansas, where they sell them at an enormous profit. But for the white portion of the confederacy, it is self-evident that the trade could not exist; the Indians might steal some for themselves, but the whites

furnish them with arms, whisky, blankets, and money, and encourage them to make raids, until the loss is supposed to amount to ninety thousand head per year. The remedy is in the hands of the government, who could make it illegal for herds, or, as they are always called here, 'bunches' of cattle to cross the state boundaries excepting at specified posts, where officers would examine the vouchers, and pass them. Nothing of this kind being done, the aggrieved stockmen took the law into their own hands, and raised a force—which still exists, as the events I speak of are of to-day—under the control of Mr John Hitson of Texas, himself a heavy sufferer by these robberies, and hence it is called 'Hitson's Cavalry.' This force is about seventy strong; the land-owner previously alluded to, and his two men, who shot the horse-thieves, being of the corps, and it carries everything with a very high hand. Without the slightest warrant, they stop herds of cattle wherever they meet them, and if any of the animals are marked with the brands included in their list—and they have the marks of more than eight hundred cattle-holders with them—they demand to see the bills of sale, and if these from any reason cannot be produced, the cavalry seize all cattle so branded. When these seizures are numerous enough to form a respectable herd, they are sent away, and sold; half the proceeds going to their respective owners, and half to the captors.

Although it was self-defence which originated this organisation, yet it can easily be seen how likely it is to be abused, and, accordingly, we find the complaints of it bitter and loud. The papers declaim most energetically against the monstrous anomaly of a body of armed men in private pay, under no recognised authority, riding in all directions, seizing and confiscating under no control but their own will. At a small town called Loma Parda, four or five of these men rode into the plaza one evening, and demanded the surrender of a 'bunch' of cattle which had recently arrived. The inhabitants, however, declared that these were the property of honest and respectable dealers, who had receipts for them, and so refused to give them up; the horsemen departed, threatening to return with reinforcements. They were as good as their word, for the next day at least forty of them entered the little hamlet, and proceeded to seize the cattle. Several of the principal inhabitants came to protest against this; but the cavalry shot two of them dead upon the spot—the postmaster, who was an American, named Seaman, being one of those killed—the rest of the villagers, being in no degree strong enough to cope with such a force, keeping within their houses until the cattle were taken away and the men had gone. The sequel is this; some of the gang, who went about at complete liberty everywhere else, were afterwards taken in the Loma Parda district, and confined in the jail at Las Vegas, which is a much stronger building than most of the frontier jails, its weakest point being, that the jailer has only twenty dollars per month, paid in depreciated county warrants. Of course they all escaped, and now go about as openly as any men can do, taking care, no doubt, to avoid Las Vegas.

Escapes, under all kinds of circumstances, from American jails are very common. On the border, the jails are the poorest mockery of the name, and any boy could cut his way out of them; while in

some towns they have none at all. For a long while our 'city' was in this latter position, and we really had nowhere to put our malefactors. Great inconvenience arose from this, as would be the case anywhere, but in the United States even murder itself is a bailable offence, and a man sentenced to take his trial for this crime is allowed to go to his own town or neighbourhood, to see if he can obtain the sureties. When there is no jail in the place, he walks about under care of an armed man, who is with him night and day; but this is a very poor substitute for a jail. At last, however, we built a prison, a very small place, but enviably strong. The cells were very small, only six feet across, lighted by a small slit in the wall, which, again, was secured by iron bars; and these orifices were unglazed, and not the slightest provision made for warming the cells—in a country where I have seen the thermometer twenty below zero, or shewing fifty-two degrees of frost, after sunrise. But there were no lavatories, or closets, or any similar accommodations for the prisoners; so the jailer was perpetually letting some one or other out of the building, and then from this it easily grew to allowing them to stop out a little when they were out, until at last the prisoners sat at the door and smoked, or chewed, and chatted with the same ease and nonchalance as their custodian himself. Yet they were not in for trivial offences: one, who was kept ironed, had committed a very savage murder; another was the most desperate ruffian in the place, and had struck a man, whose back was towards him, so tremendous a blow with a poker, as not only to fracture the skull terribly, but actually to bend the weapon. He was held to bail in fifteen thousand dollars, and the more prudent part of the inhabitants were for hanging him while they had him in their power, so as to make sure. The third man was in for selling whisky to the Indians; a very grave offence, for which the minimum penalty is a year's imprisonment; and as scarcely any other crime is likely to lead to such bad results, the punishment is not too great; but this man was a Mexican, and, so far as I could see, none but Mexicans were arrested for the offence.

To return to our prison. The jailer, who was much better paid than the official previously quoted, was removed for intoxication, and a temporary deputy appointed. This latter was a mason, who could earn much more when at his trade than by keeping jail, but as times were dull, he was willing to take charge *pro tem*. Hearing of a job, however, he undertook it, leaving the care of the jail and its inmates to a youth about eighteen. This young fellow could not refuse the liberty to his charges that they had previously enjoyed, and while the man in custody for the poker assault was at the door, his 'Mexican wife' rode up on a fast horse; she got off; the two pushed the unlucky youth into the jail; and the culprit mounted the pony, and rode safely away. Two days after, the Mexican, on being let out, made a dash, although on foot, and got clean away also. The third man, being heavily ironed, could not avail himself of these chances. Then another jailer was appointed: perhaps this was the most extraordinary feature of all, for he was a man waiting to take his trial for murder, or attempt to murder; I cannot remember which it was, but he was out on heavy bail; and the appointment of such a character to such a post is an

incident which in a romance would be looked upon as a monstrous exaggeration.*

It must be evident, from what I have already written, that one of the worst features which mark the western frontier is the absence of, or paralysis of legal power. Not uncommonly a sort of inquiry is held, when a deed of violence is committed, but this is generally known and felt to be a mere keeping up a form, and the issue can be predicted with the utmost certainty beforehand. This is said of very high tribunals, and, in short, no man has ever yet been hanged for murder, by process of law, in New Mexico. The following instance is a pretty strong case in point. I have alluded to a man who was concerned in the murder of the postmaster at Loma Parda, and of the two men who had stolen horses, and, as may be supposed, he was one of our most dangerous neighbours. He and about thirty others came into the town one night, on their way to the Texan border, as part of 'Hitson's Cavalry'; and this man, who was known by the sobriquet of 'Dump,' was particular in his inquiries on the next morning after a man named Willis, with whom he said he had an account to settle; and it was known that some half-year before these two had spoken very harshly of each other. In the course of the morning they met at a saloon, Dump being armed, while Willis was defenceless; they quarrelled, Dump forcing the quarrel upon the other; and Willis seized him, to prevent him drawing his pistol; in this he was unsuccessful, for Dump shot him below the temple, cutting some great artery, so that the blood came out with a jet, and he died directly. This took place within a few yards of my house, I may remark. That afternoon, an inquiry was held before our justice. The room was filled with the partisans and comrades of the accused, and the evidence given was of the most extraordinary character. The justice was much bewildered, and sent a note to an ex-judge, who happened to be passing through the town, to know if the evidence were admissible. The answer was as clear as need be: 'It is just as great a crime to kill a bad man as a good one.' Yet what could the justice do? What can a man do in the midst of a savage rabble armed to the teeth, and against nearly every one of whom some bloody crime can be charged? And what can a man do in a place where, in the midst of a trial for murder, a proposal is made to 'take a drink,' as it was here, and the prisoner, the counsel—there were two for the prisoner, one being the tavern-keeper (no one dared to prosecute)—the witnesses, the audience, everybody but the justice, went off in a body to liquor up? Let my readers think how they would relish such a state of society.

I need not explain that this man 'Dump' was one of the worst class of desperadoes; and even since the manslaughter of Willis, which took place so recently as July 1872, he has attempted murder in our little town, having fired at two unarmed men there on new-year's day last. At the time of the inquiry before the justice which I have just described, I had the control of a small newspaper published in the town, and I gave the particulars

* Since writing the above, even the murderer, described as being heavily ironed, has escaped from the jail, so now every man who has been incarcerated has escaped—save one debtor who refused to go. And the jailer, a fresh one, has accidentally shot himself dead with his own revolver!

of the manslaughter, and the result of the examination, being careful, however, not to provoke enmity by any strong remarks. But this did not suffice. The mere fact of my daring to report what had happened was enough, when the 'roughs' wished silence to be kept, and I was threatened with the vengeance of this hardened homicide. It is not at all safe to act as a censor of morals in the West, for positions elsewhere considered privileged confer no protection there. I remember that in Montana, only a couple of years back, a ruffian stalked into a chapel, and in the presence of the congregation, and in the midst of the service, shot the minister dead in his pulpit, on account of some real or fancied rebuke formerly given, and then—as is usually the case—got off unmolested. The most prominent editor in Denver, whose handsome daily paper would vie with the best English ones, has found, too, that it is not safer to speak your mind than it was in Martin Chuzzlewit's days. In 1860, a negro named Stark being murdered by a man named Harrison, the gentleman in question spoke very plainly on the subject, and, in consequence, a raid in broad daylight was made on his office. A mob of drunken ruffians burst in and seized him, and dragged him off to where Harrison was sitting in a drinking saloon, with the intent that the latter should inflict due punishment on the editor. Harrison, however, who was sober enough to know that a great stir would certainly follow the killing of so prominent a citizen, and that he himself would as certainly be held responsible, assisted the prisoner to escape. When this became known, the crowd went back to the office, determined that an example should be made, and that they would execute their own decrees. The office was by this time guarded and barricaded, yet one fellow, in a fit of bravado, rode right up to it, and fired two shots at random into the window; a shot in return wounded him, and he rode off, yelling and brandishing his weapon, until a gentleman, yet resident in the district, brought him to the ground with a more effectual bullet.

There is an impression in England, continually fostered by the preposterous tales professing to sketch frontier life, that, after all, allowing for the more deadly mode of settling quarrels there, things are much the same in the 'Territories' as in England. It is no such thing. I never knew an instance of a man being shot in fair fight; in open, prepared, and agreed combat. To be armed is to be 'heeled,' in western slang; and the popular idea runs that if a man is armed, and the one with whom he wishes to fight is not, the first bids the second go and get himself heeled, and will not harm him until he has done so. I was told this when I arrived out; but I had not settled down a week before a man was shot dead, as he stepped from a house into the dark street, by a hidden assassin, who was never discovered. Indeed the whole of my experience emphatically contradicts this theory. I have hardly ever known a man killed or hurt save by being waylaid, ambushed or 'bush-whacked,' by being taken off his guard, by being overpowered by numbers, or by being attacked by an armed man when he was defenceless. Their fair fights, as they call them, are more horrible than their shootings; and did our legislators but see how these men settle their quarrels, it would make them hesitate to check pugilism in England. We have all heard of gouging and the

like horrors, which are always allowed in a fair fight; but the great thing to be done is to get your antagonist down; this once accomplished, you keep him there, and kick him in the throat, the head, or places more dangerous still, until he is senseless; and this mode of fighting is by no means unusual throughout the western and more lawless States. I wish to say nothing vindictively, but literature has as yet, and for various reasons, given no proper account of the state of society 'out west.'

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER XX.—ONLY A CIGAR-CASE.

WHEN once Maggie had formed any resolution, from a sense of duty, and especially for another's sake, it was sure to be put in practice, no matter how painful might be the execution of it; but yet she found herself delaying her communication to her husband respecting Richard from day to day, on pretences (which she knew to be shallow) of a good opportunity for the discussion, of taking John when he was free from business cares, and even in the hope—such a mere shadow of expectation, that she could see through it, and all her fears behind it—that John himself would speak upon the matter. If the base things which men were saying against him should chance to reach his own ears, for instance; would he not think it right to justify himself to her? In reality, she knew that he would not do so, under any circumstances; and one of her chief reasons for speaking to him was, that he should be spared the pain of hearing such reports at first hand, not broken to him, as she meant to break them, by the voice of tenderness and duty; and yet she remained silent, and put off the evil hour. She had almost decided upon broaching the subject, one especial afternoon when John was to come home earlier than usual, by reason of a half-holiday at the factory; but a certain circumstance deferred it. Her father asked to have a bed for a few nights at Rosebank, by reason of some necessary repairs in his own house, which would for the time leave no other living-room except the nursery—as little Willie's room was called—habitable. She would have been glad in any case to welcome the old man, but the delight she experienced at his visit could now only be set down, as she well knew, to its particular opportuneness: it would necessitate the adjournment of her project, and give her a reprieve. A weight seemed lifted from her mind at once, and she set about her little preparations to receive her father with an alacrity and cheerfulness that had been strangers to her for many a day.

The room that the guest was to occupy was Richard's room, which, indeed, was the only spare bed-chamber in the house; and for the first time, since she had been mistress of Rosebank, she took a careful survey of it, to see that it was ready for his reception. It surprised herself to find with how little trepidation she set about this duty; certain memories crowded upon her mind, indeed, at the first glance, as they had done when she had visited the place in Mrs Morden's company, but they had become enfeebled by time and circumstance, and had no power to pain her as of old. The poor pictures on the wall, representing sporting scenes, Richard had bought out of his

scanty pocket-money, when a boy, and she remembered well the pride he took in shewing them to her, and how she had expressed her fears that his choice in art would not find favour with his Uncle Matthew; wherein she had proved a true prophet. Two little screens which she had painted for Richard in later years, but before he had taken to his wild courses, were on the mantel-piece, and on the arm-chair was a piece of lace that she had worked for him. These things, that would have smitten her sore but a few months back, moved her but a little. But when, like a good housewife as she was, she looked to see that all was neat within the dressing table-drawers, she came upon more tender mementos: a packet of her own letters, which artless Richard, who never used a key save for his watch, had placed in that unsecret spot; and a cigar-case, worn with use, but still bright and gay with her own embroidery. The letters she hastened to destroy, as she had destroyed his own to her, lest, on some evil day, she should be led to read in those faded leaves the records of a spring-time that was never to be renewed, and which she had done her best to forget; but the cigar-case she left where it was. Yet, curiously enough, the discovery of it affected her more than that of the letters.

How strange it seemed that Richard, when he left his home, should not have taken his cigar-case with him. Not because she had given it to him—his conduct shewed that that circumstance would have weighed with him but very little, as also that he did not omit to take it, lest the memory of her should vex him through association with it; but how sudden and undesigned must have been his departure, since an article so essential to his convenience had escaped his mind. He had been a great smoker, and was wont to take a cigar after each of his meals.

For more than an hour, Maggie sat that day in Richard's room, thinking of its lost tenant, not with painful yearning, as of yore, but with a certain terrible apprehension that had never entered into her mind before. The letter he had left behind him, the state of his pecuniary affairs, and above all, that presentation of the cheque, days after his disappearance, had all tended to convince her, as they had convinced others, that Richard had not only desired to leave Hilton, but had absolutely done so; but now, for the first time, it struck her that there was yet another elucidation of the mystery: he might have gone, not to America, as some said, but to a still more distant land, and one from which there was no return: she might have been entertaining accusing thoughts, and steeling her heart, for the last twelve months, against a dead man!

This thought, which froze her to the marrow, yet did not numb her to the sense that if this were so, the slanderous tongues that spoke against John would never be put to silence. In the very extremity of her pity for Richard, she did not lose sight of the wrong that was being done to his brother, and her determination to redress it, if she could, was not one whit diminished. Only, she resolved, since her father was about to visit Rosebank, that she would consult him upon the matter in the first place, and her husband afterwards.

Accordingly, on the very afternoon of the engraver's arrival, and before John had returned from business, Maggie broached this subject; her

father had been rallying her upon her improved looks, and on the cheerfulness (though she was grave enough just then) that had of late months been perceptible in her.

'You are twice as well, Maggie, as you were in Mitchell Street, and becoming as sprightly as a bird. "My son is my son till he gets him a wife, my daughter's my daughter all my life," says the proverb; but I tell you frankly that I am getting quite jealous of John, who is thus making you so independent of me.'

'My husband is most kind and good to me,' answered Maggie gravely; 'and my only grief, as concerns him, is, that he is not appreciated by others. Very cruel things are said about him, as I understand, father.'

'Indeed! What things?'

'Slanders about him with relation to Richard.'

'Well, then, all I can say is, that the gossips have chosen the very subject of all others on which he is immaculate—absolutely irreproachable.'

'I know it; but I wish to prove that he is so: to convince them beyond dispute that Richard left Hilton, and remains away from it, of his own free-will.'

'I am not so sure that that would be advisable,' was the old man's response. 'Mind, in the first place, it would be necessary to produce Richard—and, for my part, I think, on all accounts, it is better that he should stay where he is.'

'But we don't know where he is, father: that is the point I wish to talk to you about. If we could get to know, perhaps we could persuade him to communicate with us.'

'My dear child,' interrupted the engraver earnestly, 'if you will take my advice, you will pay no heed to foolish talk, and let well alone. If Richard meant to let you know his hiding-place, he would do so: he is not a man to be persuaded out of his own plans, whatever they are. Perhaps a part of them is to make his brother uncomfortable by this very means of ill-natured rumour. The more John helped him, the more he hated him.'

'Don't, father—don't!' pleaded Maggie. 'I am not speaking of my lover, but of my husband's brother, and for my husband's sake. If you knew all, perhaps, you would regret being so bitter against Richard. Suppose that he did not leave Hilton at all, but were now lying in his grave!'

'In his grave, Maggie? Why, we have proofs that he intended to leave Hilton, and even that he did so.'

'I thought so myself until to-day. But I have found something—a little matter, but one which fills me with a dreadful doubt.'

The engraver's face assumed a serious gravity: he himself had always had his suspicions that what Maggie suggested might really be the case, and though he was conscious that they rested mainly on the grounds of perverse prejudice, they still occasionally recurred to him. He had always thought that Dennis Blake knew more about Richard's disappearance than he chose to tell; his manner, when questioned upon the subject by John, had, to his observant eye, been false and shifty. It had come to his knowledge that Blake had been in possession of a large sum exactly at the period of Richard's disappearance, who, as his brother stated, had left Rosebank well supplied with money. The cheque, indeed, cashed some days afterwards, being drawn to order, evidenced to Richard's

not having been robbed of it by a mere footpad; but he might have lost the sum in question, or a portion of it, to Blake at play, and been murdered after his signature had been obtained! It was a horrible idea to entertain; but it did not fill Herbert Thorne with horror, nor would it, perhaps, have so affected another who chanced to stand in his place. If to wish a man dead is to kill him, we have most of us been murderers in our hearts at one time or another. If our own life is threatened, we are not blamed for wishing him who menaces it in the safest custody; and while Richard lived, something dearer than Thorne's own life was threatened—namely, the happiness of his daughter; and though he would never himself have lifted a finger against him, or connived at such a crime, he would certainly at no time have been sorry to hear that such a pestilent fellow had disappeared from the earth's surface, and gone under it. At the same time, so far from feeling grateful to the man that murdered Richard, he would have loathed him as much as any other manslayer, and done his best to bring him to justice; and the vague suspicions he harboured respecting Dennis Blake had made him only more hateful to him than heretofore. When Maggie said that 'she had found something,' it struck him at once that it was some piece of evidence in connection with this man, and in the same flash of thought, it occurred to him: 'And if it be so, shall I reveal to her my own ideas upon this point, or not?' Blake had sunk somewhat suddenly from bad to worse, and was already a ruined and degraded man, of whom it might well be said, that his sin had found him out. What need was there to hunt this wretch to death, who, being at bay, might revenge himself upon them all, by telling hideous truths about the unhappy Richard; or still more hideous lies, such as he had told already about Maggie herself. Upon the whole, he rapidly decided not to encourage her in her suspicions, unless the proofs were very strong.

It was a positive relief, therefore, to the engraver when he found that all his daughter had to tell him was, that Richard Milbank had left his cigar-case behind him. Such a communication would not have troubled him at all, except so far as it seemed to evidence a morbid interest in the man whom he had begun to flatter himself his daughter was learning to forget. If he had left his watch, indeed, it might have suggested an intention to return; but his cigar-case! It seemed to him sheer folly to found so grave a supposition as that of a man's decease on such slight ground. But, then, Herbert Thorne was not an habitual smoker; he only took one pipe in the kitchen 'the last thing' before he went to bed at night, and had no conception of the demands tobacco makes upon its votaries. Moreover, he had not studied Richard as the woman had done who loved him, and was consequently ignorant that not an hour of the day was wont to elapse without that little case, with R. M. so delicately embroidered on it, being brought into requisition by the missing man.

If the engraver had less observation in his composition than his daughter, he had, however, more logic. 'Why, don't you see, you little goose,' urged he, 'that your fact disproves your words? You say that it is impossible that Richard should have forgotten his cigar-case, and yet, since you find it in his room, it is certain he did forget it; and if he forgot it for five minutes, why not for five hours?

or, at all events, for so long a time, that, finding himself, when he did miss it, so far away from home, it was not worth his while to return for it.'

'I see,' said Maggie reluctantly. But in reality she saw nothing; the argument was too strong for her to combat, but the conviction in her own mind remained exactly as it was before. Moreover, the sudden trouble in her father's face, when she first began to speak upon this matter, had not escaped her. Was it possible that he really knew something of Richard's fate, perhaps even of his present abiding-place, yet would not tell it, through distrust of her, or fear of disturbing her peace of mind? In the former case, he underrated her moral courage and her sense of duty; in the latter, he was mistaken in supposing she could be tranquil while the general voice unjustly accused her husband. She would confute that, and see him righted, at all hazards, if woman's wit could do it. So impatient did she become to effect this, that her father's stay at Rosebank, to which she had looked forward with such pleasure, became almost irksome to her, since, while he remained, she felt unable to commence her plans. He had already, as it were, declared himself inimical to them, and would, without doubt, throw the weight of his advice into the scale in favour of leaving matters as they were. And certainly, if the engraver had been appealed to, he would have so advised. Affairs seemed to him to be going on very well at Rosebank—better, perhaps, than in his heart of hearts he had expected them to go. That John was all tenderness and devotion, did not surprise him; but he was delighted to find that the devotion, at least, was reciprocated on Maggie's part. She studied her husband's wishes in all respects, which, from their very rarity, and his own reticence about them, was a difficult task. It would have been easier to please a man who likes his newspaper cut for him, his bacon at breakfast streaky, and is particular about having his greatcoat hung up by the loop, than silent, unexact John; but Maggie shewed that she understood her husband thoroughly; and where that is the case, thought the engraver, the pillars of domestic peace stand fast, and are not to be shaken. Nor had he to complain, as he had pretended to do, out of the fulness of his joy at her content, that the father was neglected for the husband; she fell at once into her former pursuits to keep him company—for the old man loved to be at work, wherever he was—listened to all his scientific projects with a sympathising ear, and shewed herself so like the Maggie that she had been, ere the glamour of Richard's love had thrown itself around her, that, though he flattered himself he had put her suspicions to rest, it seemed to him, it mattered little even if they still smouldered, for, that whether alive or dead, that ne'er-do-well, her former lover, would never have the power to trouble her more.

CHAPTER XXI.—DARBY AND JOAN.

'I am afraid you will miss your father,' said John tenderly, as he and Maggie sat once more, Darby and Joan, together, over their tea, on the evening of the engraver's departure. 'Your life is a very humdrum one, I fear, my darling, with little to enliven it.'

'I do not find it humdrum, John, if that means tedious,' was Maggie's quiet answer: 'even when you're away, I'm never dull.'

'I know it, Maggie: you are diligence itself. But employment does not always mean happiness: one works sometimes only to avoid thinking—that is, I mean, some people do,' added he quickly. 'Your father, it is true, loves work for its own sake; work, too, such as his projected inventions, which seem doomed to come to nothing.'

'Not now, husband,' answered Maggie softly. 'You do good by stealth, and blush even to find it known to me. He has found a partner, he told me, in London, who is willing to share the expense of patenting his terminable ink. Do you suppose I did not guess who that partner was?'

'You did not tell him, I do hope?'

'Not I. I read your wish to make him believe the offer sprang from genuine appreciation of the merits of his invention. He hopes by means of it to pay back to you the loan you advanced to him; that is, even at the best, you will reimburse yourself out of one pocket for the losses of the other. It seemed to me so strange that he should be so easily tricked.'

'Why so, when he has a just confidence in the results of his own ingenuity?'

'Of course, that blinds him; but his knowledge of your generous delicacy ought to have put him on his guard. How little does my father know you, John! I wish he did; I wish everybody did.'

She felt her pulses beating high; she was on the verge of that delicate subject which she had made up her mind to broach that night; her next sentence was to carry her into it. How little he suspected it, as he sat smiling gravely at her earnest manner!

'What is anybody's opinion to me, Maggie, or everybody's, if only I have your good word?'

'To me, at all events, it is a great deal, John; I mean, as respects yourself. I wish the world to understand you as I do.' She still hesitated, like a bather who sees the water deep, and dark, and cold, and shudders on the brink, ere he takes his plunge.

'John, dear—her voice shook, and the hand which she laid tenderly on his, trembled like a rose-leaf—'I wish you would let me write to Richard.'

'To Richard!' he echoed, dropping the cup of tea he held upon the floor, where it was smashed to atoms, yet taking not the least notice of that catastrophe. 'To Richard, did you say?'

She had expected him to be deeply moved, but the horror and amazement depicted on his features fairly terrified her.

'Dear husband, do not look like that,' pleaded she; 'I had not thought to distress you so exceedingly. The past is past with me, and gives me no such pain in recurring to it. You are too noble to be jealous, and I should be vile indeed to give you cause even in thought. It is not of Richard that was once my lover that I wish to speak, but of our brother Richard.'

'I know, I know,' answered he impatiently; 'but why should we speak of him? What good can come of it? He is gone. I am here. Nothing can alter that. Why should you torture me?'

'For your own sake, John; or, if you do not heed what men say of you, then for mine,' answered Maggie firmly. 'Every word they utter against you respecting him, to whom you have been so uniformly kind, stabs me to the heart. I know it to be false, but I wish to prove it so.'

'What is it that men say about me?' inquired John. His voice was so hoarse, his look so haggard, that Maggie already repented of having ventured on this delicate ground, and would have retraced her footsteps, but it was too late. 'Come,' said he gently, but firmly, 'since you have told me thus far, you must tell me all. What is it that I am accused of?'

'They say that you connived at Richard's leaving home, and that you were glad of it.'

'Then they say truth,' was the unexpected reply. 'How could I help being glad of it?'

'Yes; but the connivance, John. They say you bought his absence from the factory.'

'Is it so new a thing, then, for one man to buy another out of a business, especially when he has half-ruined it? If he received the equivalent, what matters?'

'But there was yet another reason, John, why you wished Richard away, they say,' continued Maggie, in a trembling voice, 'and here I know that they speak falsely. They dare to hint that you were scheming from the first to rob Richard of my love; that even at the time he thought me his, the more you had resolved to make me yours; and when he had brought his fortunes to the lowest ebb, you took advantage of his necessities to buy me of him.'

'Is that all?' asked John slowly.

'All! husband? Is it not enough? Do you not feel for me, as I feel for you, when such things are said? Or has the love which you were once content to see upon one side, gone wholly over to the other?'

'If it has gone but a little, Maggie, I am quite content,' answered the other, sighing heavily. 'I was afraid it had not, since I have certainly lost none. Are you angry with me because I asked "if that was all?" When men begin to lie, why should they stop at this point or at that?'

'Then they do lie?' cried Maggie eagerly. 'You never played the traitor to poor Richard, even in your heart?'

'No; never!'

'And if he could come back, and stand here now—'

'Hush, hush!' interrupted John, with a scared face, and holding up his hand for silence.

'What is it? I did not hear anything.'

'Nor I,' said he, but still with a distracted air. 'I wished you not to speak so loud, that's all.'

'I say, John, if Richard should return, or could communicate with us, he would himself acquit you of this charge, would hold you innocent.'

'Yes, yes; I swear it!' exclaimed the other earnestly; 'the All-seeing Eye above us holds me so.'

'I knew it! Listen, then, to me, John. I am your own true, faithful wife. Nothing can part us, nothing make me undervalue you. I can write to him as to my own father; let me do so.'

'Let you write to Richard!' answered he, looking up quickly from the ground. 'How can that be?'

'That is another matter, John; I only want your leave. I would write to him as a sister; he has lost all claim to think of me as, as—anything else; and I would appeal to him as to a brother, yours and mine. I would let him know what injury his long silence is doing you; I would appeal to him as a man of feeling and of honour,

to write one line—not of forgiveness; he has nothing to forgive—but of reconciliation. I would bid him tell us the whole story of his absence, or, at least, so much as would clear your name of all connivance with it.’

‘You would have no reply,’ answered John coldly.

‘Perhaps not. It is possible, of course—I think sometimes that it must be so—that your brother is no more. Oh, pardon me for giving you such pain, John; but you know not what I suffer! This talk will soon be over, and then we shall forget it; but what these base people say, they will go on saying for ever, and I shall have to listen.’

‘Listen!’ echoed her husband—‘listen!’ Again his face wore that scared look, again his hand was raised mechanically, then, trembling, sank upon the table. ‘I beg your pardon, love: what was it you said last? “This talk will soon be over.” Let it be so.’

‘But a few words more, dear. I say, if Richard be dead (which from my heart I hope not!), or will not answer me, we shall still be in no worse position than at present. What harm can there be in writing? I ought to have done it long ago, for his own sake’ (here she blushed); ‘indeed, I think I ought; but for your own, I am sure of it! Do, do, John, let me write to Richard!’

‘Write to him! Why, whither would you write?’

‘I do not know; I thought you would help me there.’

‘I help you?’ answered her husband, with a quick suspicious glance. ‘How should I help you? Why I, more than others? You read the letter which he left at parting; so did your father and the rest. I know no more of where he is than you.’

‘But you may suspect, John; and, by your face, I think you do.’

‘My face!’ cried he, rising suddenly, and going to the looking-glass. ‘What is the matter with my face?’

‘Nothing, John—to your eyes, perhaps; but I am your wife, and skilled to read in it what others miss. You may not know where Richard is, but you can make a shrewd guess at it. Did he never speak to you of going away before he wrote that letter?’

‘Well, yes, he did, but very vaguely. My impression is, that he was thinking of going to America.’

‘Indeed? Then it chimes with mine, John!’ cried Maggie eagerly. ‘Once, long ago, just after your uncle’s death, he spoke to me of emigrating to New York.’

‘That’s like enough,’ answered the other, returning to his own quiet tones: he had sat down again, and teaspoon in hand, was making lines upon the table with a thoughtful air. ‘There would be no harm in writing to New York, Maggie;’ and then he sighed, as though he would have added, ‘and no good.’

‘At all events, John, in doing that, I should feel I am doing something. I think we owe that much to him, or at least that I do, and I am sure I owe it to you. I will write the letter this very night, and when it is finished, you shall tell me whether you approve of the contents. If he has any desire to hear from us at all, he would give himself the only chance there was, would he not, John, and inquire for letters at the Poste Restante?’

‘I suppose so,’ answered he mechanically.

‘And you really think that this is the best course we can adopt?’

‘I know of no other. But, in my opinion, it will be labour in vain.’

‘Not in vain, John, so far as I am concerned,’ answered Maggie quietly, ‘whether Richard writes or not.’

Her husband made no reply, and presently went up-stairs, where he remained for a considerable time. On his return, he cast a nervous look towards the table, at which she sat busily engaged.

‘Are you writing, Maggie?’

‘Yes, dear: this is some work I am doing for my father. It is an experiment in Terminable Ink. Exactly six weeks from this date, if his calculations are correct, this sheet of paper will be blank. It will not fade in the meantime, even up to the very day before—But I forgot; I am speaking to his partner in the patent. It seems to me an invention which, however ingenious, can never be made profitable.’

A smile flitted across his grave face, and left it graver. ‘It will not make our fortunes, dear.’

‘How good and kind you are, John!’ said Maggie softly. ‘I am so sorry to have pained you to-night. Here is the letter to Richard. I have thought over its contents for months, and had only to set them down. Will you not read it?’

‘No, Maggie;’ he pushed the note away with his hand, not peevishly, but with a slow determined motion. ‘Whatever you have thought it right to say, must needs be right.’

The generous delicacy that made him forbear to peruse her words—the first she had ever addressed to Richard since they two were sundered—touched her heart.

‘Husband,’ cried she, rising from her chair and approaching him, ‘I told you once that I could never love you: I was wrong. The love has come, and through him who seemed to be its obstacle. She was about to caress him, but into his wan pale face there stole the vacant listening look that she had noticed twice before that evening, and it chilled her.’

HAPPY ACCIDENTS.

WHEN little Miss Hewett fell into the Thames from the window of her father’s house on London Bridge, the accident was a happy one for the plucky apprentice who took a header, and saved the baby heiress from drowning; for, in grateful guerdon of the lad’s ready courage, when, in due time, baby developed into a pretty maiden, Sir William would listen to no wealthier suitor, vowing that he who had saved the lass from death, should possess her for life; and the damsel being of the same mind, Edward Osborne married the daughter of the merchant prince, and lived happy ever afterwards. That well rewarded dive was a commonplace act of devotion beside that by which a page once proved his love for his master, thanks to the peculiar method of cure adopted by the physician of William of Orange, when the small-pox threatened to bring the Prince’s life to an end. Nothing, the doctor said, could save the patient, unless some healthy young man became his bed-fellow, and, by infolding him closely in his arms, should impart sufficient heat to his body to force the

obstinate disease to break out. William's page, Bentineck, volunteered for the dangerous office. The experiment succeeded, and the faithful youth escaped unharmed, to share his master's rising fortunes, became prime-minister of England, and found a ducal house in the land of his adoption. Little did the City apothecary dream, when he offered to drive Lord Bute to the cricket-match on Moulsey Hurst, that he was giving his country neighbour a lift in a double sense. Frederiek, Prince of Wales, was a spectator at the match, and to amuse him while the players were waiting for the rain to give over, a rubber of whist was proposed. Noblemen being scarce, there was a difficulty as to making up the set, until some one remembered having seen Lord Bute on the ground. He was found, and asked to join the royal party; and having played his cards so well, when the game was over, the Prince invited him to Kew. There acquaintanceship soon ripened into friendship, and ere long the Scottish earl was all in all at Leicester House; adviser-in-chief to host and hostess, and director of the education of their son, the heir to the throne. With George III.'s accession came rapid advancement; from privy-counsellor to secretary of state, from secretary of state to premier; honours the best abused minister of his time might never have held but for taking a hand at whist on a rainy morning.

Strolling across the fields near Sayes Court, Evelyn came upon a dismal-looking house, and, peeping in at a window, saw a young man busy wood-carving. Slipping inside, he beheld 'such a work as, for curiosity of handling, drawing, and studious exactness,' surpassed anything of the kind he had yet seen. Evelyn told the king of his find; and obtaining employment for the genius he had so unexpectedly unearthed, started Grinling Gibbons on the road to fame and fortune. Sherwin the engraver might have ended his days as a chopper of wood, if he had not been called into Mr Mitford's drawing-room to receive some orders while the young ladies were amusing themselves drawing. Seeing his wood-cutter taking earnest note of what the fair artists were about, Mr Mitford asked if he could do anything that way. Sherwin said he did not know that he could, but he should like to try. Paper and pencil were placed in his hands; and, spite of his stiff and callous fingers, he produced a drawing that astonished all present, and which, being presented to the Society of Arts, gained the untaught draughtsman the Society's silver medal. Thus encouraged, Sherwin betook himself to town, exchanged the axe for the burin, and won for himself a name in the world of art. Sharp the painter owed the favour he enjoyed at court to an odd misadventure. It was the custom for the royal attendants, when the king passed along the lobbies of the palace, to clear the way by crying out: 'Sharp, sharp, look sharp!' This cry reaching Sharp's ears as he was preparing colours in a room in the palace, he, thinking he was called, rushed out to meet the impatient caller, and coming into collision with His Majesty, the painter measured his length upon the floor. From that time George III. lost no opportunity of pushing the fortunes of the artist so strangely introduced to his notice. Sharp rose through his own fall. Halil Pasha was indebted for his rise in the world to such an everyday occurrence as the upsetting of a lamp. He happened to be doing some tinman's work in the

apartment of the Sultana Validé, when that lady knocked down a much-prized French lamp, to the utter derangement of its internal economy. Despairing of finding any mechanic in Constantinople capable of repairing the damages, the Sultana proposed sending it to Paris; whereupon the young tinman offered to try his skill, and succeeded in putting the lamp in good order again. The pleased owner recommended him to her son, the Sultan; and he, after testing the capacity of the Sultana's protégé in various ways, ultimately appointed him to the office of Grand-master of Artillery; an appointment Halil Pasha justified by inventing a new cartridge, improving the armament of the forces, and completing the defences of the Dardanelles. Greater things still were expected of him; but as an accident brought him to the front, so an accident brought his career to an abrupt close, and deprived the Porte of an able servant.

Wallenstein the magnificent, the self-absorbed captain, who never lost but one battle, might have remained a fool all his life, had not his brain been started into activity by his head trying conclusions with the pavement. Mabillon was little better than an idiot until he fractured his skull, in descending a stone staircase without using his feet. Foote, if his powers were not developed by an accident, was enabled to turn his wit and mimic talent to more profitable purpose through losing a leg by falling from his horse when riding in the Duke of York's company; that obtained him his Haymarket patent, bringing him years of prosperity, a prosperity that might have been lifelong could he have steered clear of offending a revengeful woman. By a much slighter mishap than the breaking of a limb, the stage lost a good actor, but the theatre's loss was the world's gain. We have reason to be thankful that a cold in the head prevented Charles Dickens keeping his appointment with the Covent Garden manager, and compelled him to postpone giving them a taste of his histrionic quality till another season. Then, says he, 'I made a great splash in the Gallery; the *Chronicle* opened to me; I had a distinction in the little world of the newspaper, which made me like it; began to write; didn't want money; had never thought of the stage but as a means of getting it; gradually left off turning my thoughts that way; and never resumed the idea. See how near I may have been to another sort of life!' See how near we all may have been, but for that cold, to never knowing Pickwick, Old Weller, and the irrepressible Sam, Captain Cuttle, Dick Swiveller, Micawber, and the host of friends whose names are familiar in our mouths as household words! To such a trivial accident do they owe their being; just as the red-skinned heroes of Fenimore Cooper would never have been heard of, but for their creator's being wearied out of all patience by a dull novel, until, throwing it down in disgust, he exclaimed: 'I could do better than this myself!' and setting to work, did it. Thorwaldsen would have gone back to Denmark a disappointed man—perhaps forsworn the sculptor's art—if a flaw in his passport had not obliged him, much against his will, to stay twenty-four hours longer in Rome. Before the twenty-four hours had passed away, Mr Hope had walked into the studio, admired the Jason, and commissioned the despairing Dane to execute it in marble. Thorwaldsen's boxes were unpacked again; and from that time he never knew

what it was to be idle for want of work to be done.

The cracking of a picture placed in the sunshine set Van Eyck experimenting to produce a varnish that would dry in the shade; he found what he sought, and found beside that by mixing it with his colours, they acquired greater force and brilliancy, and required no subsequent varnishing; and so came about the discovery, or rediscovery, of the art of painting in oil. Mezzotinto owed its invention by Prince Rupert to the simple accident of a sentry's gun-barrel being rusted by the dew. Henry Schanward, a Nuremberg glass-cutter, happened to let some aqua-fortis fall upon his spectacles, and noticed the glass was corroded and softened where the aqua-fortis had touched it. Taking the hint, he made a liquid accordingly, drew some figures upon a piece of glass, covered them with varnish, and applied his corroding fluid, cut away the glass around his drawing, so that when he removed the varnish, the figures appeared raised upon a dark ground; and etching upon glass was added to the ornamental arts. Alois Senefelder, playwright and actor, thinking it possible to etch upon stone in lieu of copper, polished a slab for the purpose. He was disturbed by his mother coming into his small laboratory with a request that he would jot down her list of things for the wash, as the woman was waiting to take the basket away. There being neither paper nor ink handy, Senefelder scribbled the items on his stone with his etching preparation, that he might copy them at his leisure. Some time afterwards, when about to clean the stone, he thought he might as well see what would be the effect of biting the stone with aqua-fortis, and in a few minutes saw the writing standing out in relief. Taking up a pelt-ball charged with printing-ink, he inked the stone, took off a few impressions upon paper, and he had invented lithography. The pelt-ball used by Senefelder was long indispensable in a printing-office. A Salopian printer in a hurry to get on with a job, could not find his ball, and inked the form with a piece of soft glue that had fallen out of the glue-pot; with such excellent results, that he thenceforth discarded the pelt-ball altogether, and by adding treacle to the glue, to keep it from hardening, hit upon the composition of which printers' rollers have ever since been made.

Three very different discoveries are recorded to have resulted from the unintentional application of intense heat. Pliny attributes the discovery of glass to some merchants travelling with nitre, who, stopping on the banks of a river to take a meal, were at a loss for stones to rest their kettles upon. Putting them upon pieces of nitre, they kindled their fires; the nitre, dissolved by the heat, mixed with the sand, and the merchants were astonished to see a transparent matter flowing over the ground, which was nothing else, but glass. Charles Goodyear had for years experimented in vain, hoping to deprive india-rubber of its susceptibility to the action of heat and cold. Conversing with a friend on the subject, he emphasised an assertion by flinging a piece of sulphured rubber across the room. It lighted upon the stove; and when he picked it up, a few days afterwards, he found the intense heat to which it had been subjected had conferred upon the india-rubber just the quality he had so long striven to impart to it. According to some, he stumbled upon the discovery in a different manner; but, at anyrate, vulcanised india-rubber

was the creation of an accident. A Limerick tobacconist looking dolefully at his poor neighbours groping among the smouldering ruins of his burned-out shop, noticed that some of them, after trying the contents of certain canisters, carefully loaded their waistcoat pockets from them. He followed suit, and found the snuff had come out of the fiery ordeal very much improved in pungency and aroma. Like a wise man, he said nothing, but took another place, set up a lot of ovens, and before long, Black Yard Snuff—otherwise 'Irish Blackguard'—was all the rage with lovers of nasal titillation; and in a few years Lundyfoot was a rich man, owing to the accident he thought had ruined him. A would-be alchemist seeking to discover what mixture of earths would make the strongest crueibles, one day found he had made porcelain. Instead of transmuting metals as he had fondly hoped to do, Bottger transmuted himself: 'as if he had been touched with a conjurer's wand, he was on a sudden transformed from an alchemist into a potter.'

Cornelius Drebbel placed in his window some extract of cochineal with which he intended to fill a thermometer; into this some aqua-regia dropped from a broken phial standing just above it, and Drebbel's purple liquid was converted into a beautiful scarlet one. How this came to pass, puzzled him not a little, but he ascertained that the aqua-regia had dissolved some of the tin of the window-frame on its way to the cochineal. Telling this to his son-in-law, Kuffelar, a dyer at Leyden, the latter turned the information to such good account, that 'Kuffelar's Colour,' as it was called, proved a little gold mine to its godfather. Beckmann says: 'Through the means of Colbert, one of the Gobelins learned the process used for preparing the German scarlet dye from one Gluck, and the Parisian scarlet dye soon rose into so great repute, that the populace imagined that Gobelin had acquired his art from the devil'—all because Drebbel chose to make use of a broken bottle. Mrs East, the wife of an English papermaker, is said to have been the first producer of blue-tinted writing-paper. Going among the vats while the workmen were away for their dinner-hour, she let a blue bag fall into one of them, and horrified at the mischief she had done, said not a word about the matter. The spoiled paper was hidden away in his warehouse by the angry papermaker for four years; then he sent it to his London agent to be sold for what it would fetch. The novelty was admired, and the agent not only sold the whole stock of blue paper at a high price, but asked for more. Then Mrs East unbosomed herself, claiming a new cloak as the reward of her fortunate carelessness; and her husband was enabled for a while to reap a rich harvest, until the demand became so great that other makers devised means for the same end, and manufactured blue paper as a matter of course. Even those now necessary utilities, envelopes, originated accidentally. A Brighton stationer took a fancy for dressing his window with piles of writing-paper, rising gradually from the largest to the smallest size in use, and to finish his pyramids off nicely, he cut cards to bring them to a point. Taking these cards for diminutive note-paper, lady customers were continually wanting some of 'that dear little paper,' and the stationer found it advantageous to cut some paper to the desired pattern. But then there was no space for addressing the notelets when they

were folded; and after much cogitation, he invented the envelope, which he cut with the aid of metal plates made for the purpose. The sale increased so rapidly, that he was unable to produce his envelopes fast enough; so he commissioned a dozen houses to make them for him, and thus set going an important branch of the manufacturing stationery trade.

At the time of the last war between England and France, a brig, commanded by an American, was captured off San Domingo by the *Sparrow* cutter; under the belief she was sailing under false colours, or at anyrate carried enemy's goods. The Admiralty court at Port Royal found the ship's papers perfectly correct; and as the captain swore hard and fast to her American nationality, the court decided in his favour. The Yankee immediately commenced proceedings against the *Sparrow's* commander, Lieutenant Wylie, for the illegal capture. While the case was pending, a small tender, in charge of Midshipman Felton, entered the port, and the young officer being a friend of Wylie's, went on board the *Sparrow*, and was not long before he became acquainted with the latter's misfortune, and most unexpectedly delighted him by declaring the brig was a lawful prize, and the proof forthcoming. It appeared that the tender, cruising near the spot where the *Sparrow's* chase began, sighted a shark, which was upon deck in a very short time. Hearing the men employed cutting the monster up ery out: 'Stand by to receive letters, boys; the postman's come on board!' Mr Felton went to see what it meant, and received a bundle of papers just taken from the shark's maw. Upon examination, these turned out to be the genuine papers of the brig, thrown overboard when capture was imminent; and they proved beyond any doubt that her cargo was French. The friends hastened to Kingston; but the news had travelled on before them, and the American skipper had disappeared, leaving his ship to be condemned, and Lieutenant Wylie to be made richer by three thousand pounds. Wylie and his crew were not the only ones destined to profit by the happily timed catch. In consequence of information derived from the strangely recovered papers, the captain of the *Trent* frigate was instructed to look out for a certain brig, engaged in the same risky business, having one Pearl Darkey for its master. Before many days had passed, the *Trent* fell in with a vessel answering the description given, and Captain Otway ordered her to heave to. As soon as the American skipper appeared on the frigate's quarter-deck, Captain Otway accosted him with: 'Glad to see you, Mr Pearl Darkey; you are the very man I have been looking for. I know all about you, and am going to send you to Port Royal.' Taken aback by the unexpected recognition, Mr Pearl Darkey, for it was he, did not deny his identity, or demur to visiting Port Royal, where his ship and his cargo were adjudged a lawful prize to the *Trent*.

A poor clergyman, proud as he was poor, was part owner of a barren piece of land for which a nobleman was in treaty. The latter had agreed to pay the clergyman a small sum to relinquish his rights, but failing to keep an appointment to settle the affair, Mr Hughes went away in a huff, and refused to have any further communication with the unpunctual lord. A rich vein of copper afterwards came to light on the very property, and the clergyman eventually drew more than fifty thousand

a year from the land he had so nearly given up. Mr Coutts was indebted for his success as a banker to it coming accidentally to his ears, just soon after he began business, that a certain London bank had refused a noble customer the loan of ten thousand pounds. Mr Coutts immediately wrote to the nobleman, asking him to favour him with a call, and when he called, offered to lend him the desired sum.

'But I can give you no security,' said the peer.

'Your lordship's note of hand will suffice,' was the response. The offer was closed with; and the borrower departing with five thousand pounds, left the rest upon deposit. The story soon got about, and brought great aristocratic customers. Then it reached the king's ears. His Majesty desired to see such a liberal banker, and was so delighted with his conversation, that he ordered his account to be transferred to Coutts's bank: the royal example had plenty of imitators, and the foundation of the great banker's fortune was laid.

Happy accidents have so often happened, that it would require a volume to do full justice to the subject. Ere we part with it, we must cite one more illustration—that of the man aiming a stone at a dog, and missing the animal, to hit and kill his mother-in-law: this a famous French writer evidently considered the happiest accident upon record, for he asks confidently if the lucky stone-thrower had not reason to say with Menander:

By this I see,
Fortune does better aim than we!

ODDS AND ENDS.

FROM DR ROBERT CHAMBERS'S SCRAP-BOOK.

A FUTURE RETROSPECT.—One day, a subject was suggested to me by Leigh Hunt—the barbarisms of the present age as contemplated from some supposable point in an improved future. There is here a fertile subject of thought. [The value of such an estimate of the present state of things would depend on the common-sense of the writer. The projectors of fantastic social and political theories would try to make out many things in the present age to be barbarisms that are not barbarous at all, but, on the contrary, rational and proper. Speculative writers, however, would be safe in imagining lamentations over the gross ignorance of large masses of people; the existence of an habitual criminal class; the prodigious sums spent upon intoxicating drinks; the waste of time on what some are pleased to call recreation, but which in too many cases is obviously demoralising idleness; the want of a correct knowledge of political economy, by which certain nations and colonies endeavour to enrich themselves by protective tariffs, which merely rob everybody all round; the attempts to reconstruct society by visionary schemes which history has again and again demonstrated to be futile and mischievous; vehement desires for legislative enactment to remedy evils only curable by moral consciousness and improved tastes and habits; the numerous deaths caused by neglect of sanitary arrangements; the cruel treatment of animals.

All these, and some other points we could specify, might form a ground-work for a treatise picturing a future retrospect.]

A CUNNING SHOEMAKER.—It would be a mistake to suppose that country people are excelled in cunning by the more alert population of cities. The very reverse, I believe, is the case. There is an ingenious meanness in the schemes of some country people—those in small towns in particular—which you could not find in a large city, where there is usually a more liberal style of thinking and dealing. A well-educated man with honourable feelings is no match for the low cunning which may be brought against him in dealings with a certain class of persons in rural districts. Sir Walter Scott knew this from experience, and illustrates the point in the *Antiquary*, where Jonathan Oldbuck is victimised by Johnny Howie, an illiterate bonnet laird. A specimen of low cunning in the case of Sandy S—, a shoemaker in a small town in the south of Scotland, comes to my recollection. He was a bachelor of advanced age, who, by dint of pinching and screwing, had realised what he deemed a competency, and he resolved to retire from business. The very serious question, however, arose, how he was to procure payment of his accounts. His business had been the making of shoes for female servants in the country all around; the practice being, that when payment was made for one pair of shoes, orders were taken for another. Afraid to announce his proposed retirement, lest there should be any shortcoming in his receipts, a mean device was resorted to. Proceeding round the country as was usual at a certain season, he received payment from each individual debtor, at the same time taking fresh orders. But the orders were never executed! Sandy retired (not very honourably), on the result of his trick. We could hardly imagine a city tradesman resorting to so discreditable an expedient for winding up his affairs.

FAMILY LIKENESSES.—In going through the picture-galleries of noblemen's mansions, one is often struck with family likenesses in different generations. Sometimes the general likeness is lost, and then it casts up again. You may trace a high forehead, a prominent nose, and piercing dark eyes for centuries. The soft features of George I. and II. are conspicuous in George III. and his descendants. Each of us may be said to possess some kind of likeness to one or other of our ancestors. The resemblance is more particularly marked in parts of the person. A man's hands may resemble those of his paternal grandmother, while his feet are exactly like those of his maternal grandfather. We are in some respects composed of bits of predecessors. What is equally curious, there are mental as well as physical resemblances. A man will occasionally find himself performing some act precisely as he remembers his father doing the same thing many years ago. The tracing of family likenesses may be made illustrative of history. A writer in *Notes and Queries* (1852), has the following remarks on the subject: 'Any one who knows the face of the present Duke of Manchester will see a strong likeness to his great ancestor, through six generations, the Earl of Manchester of the Commonwealth, as engraved in Lodge's *Portraits*. The following instance is more remarkable: Elizabeth Hervey was Abbess of Elstow in 1501. From her brother

Thomas is descended, in a direct line, the present Marquis of Bristol. If any one will lay the portrait of Lord Bristol, in Mr Gage Rokewode's *Thingoe Hundred*, by the side of the sepulchral brass of the Abbess of Elstow, figured in Fisher's *Bedfordshire Antiquities*, they cannot but be struck by the strong likeness between the two faces. This is valuable evidence on the disputed point whether portraits were attempted in sepulchral brasses.'

SHYNESS is a curious peculiarity of some men, and the explanation of much that is dubious and obscure in their behaviour. It may arise from an inherent modesty and reluctance to intrude, from a sense of inferiority, or a notion that people look down on you, in which case it is a kind of mistaken pride. It often happens that a man gets the reputation of being haughty or unsocial, when he is only shy. An unconquerable bashfulness oppresses him. When such a man is drawn into company—participating in the excitement of the hour, and having got over all the difficulties of the first address, he generally 'comes out.' Often we find him talkative and entertaining, so that strangers go away, saying: 'Well, there is one of the pleasantest men I have ever met with.' Strange it is next day to meet the same man in the street, and find him make an effort to avoid you, or at least to hurry past you with an awkward bow. Lord M., a person of this kind, always walked along the inner side of the pavement, with eyes groundward bent, as if anxious to escape observing or being observed. A person who is associated with him in duty every day for one half the year, has actually known him to cross to another side of the road on being approached, and endeavour to escape his notice by pretending to take an interest in something on the other side of the hedge. Men, on the contrary, who get the reputation of being forward, are often merely persons of strong animal spirits; these rendering them frank and bold in society, where, from their comparative rank, they are expected to be quiet and respectful.

SIGNING WITH A CROSS.—Persons who cannot write, sign their name, as is well known, with the mark of a cross. Such mark, however, can be easily imitated, and how, in ordinary circumstances, are forgeries to be detected? In the following, picked from an American newspaper (1848), there is perhaps a solution of the difficulty. A wealthy merchant in Chili could not write, and he signed with a cross. A bill upon him with a forged cross, on being presented for payment, was refused. A lawsuit ensued. The judge before whom the case was brought asked the merchant how he could prove that the mark was a forgery. In reply, he said the proof was a secret which he would reveal to him privately. He then explained, that in signing with a cross he drew the pen along the side of his thumb, so that each limb of the cross was the side of his thumb in profile. The proof was deemed satisfactory. The holder of the bill was nonsuited.

DEMANDS FOR MONEY.—The present might justly be called the money-seeking age. You are almost daily asked for sums of money for one object or other; such as public charities, the support of schools, churches, new varieties of hospitals, and testimonials to individuals. During the last week, I have had demands for two testimonials. There is positively no decency or sense of consideration in these applications. Everybody is supposed to be

possessed of a mine of wealth, which may be drawn upon at pleasure. A worthy clergyman of my acquaintance tells me that if he were to give to all the demands made on him, nothing would be left to himself. Is not this loose practice of asking money from all and sundry something indefensible? In London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool, and other large centres of population, the system has become intolerable. Albert Smith, the novelist, has been so annoyed with the demands on him, that he has framed a reply in print, which he sends to applicants. Here it is: 'Mr Albert Smith regrets that in consequence of the increasing applications to him for loans, subscriptions, and money generally, he must refuse Mr —'s application.' [We copy this from the Scrap-book, under date June 18, 1853, since which time the system of begging money by wholesale, far exceeding the old-fashioned practice of street mendicancy, has become an imposing modern institution.]

ADVERSITY.—The 'school of adversity,' as it is called, may have some of the good qualities commonly ascribed to it; but it is far from meriting an unmitigated eulogium. Early discipline to inculcate habits of economy and industry is invaluable for chastening the character, and insuring success in many social departments; but years of pinching poverty and neglect, with nothing but hope to cheer, will often be found to have sad effects in rousing and producing an ungenial spirit. In those who, to external appearance, acted well in their depressed days, and manfully fought the good fight, may sometimes be traced an exacerbated spirit, which even good fortune fails to assuage. Great pliability, good-nature, and magnanimity of character, are required to get fully over pungent recollections of unmerited contumely and suffering.

MYSTERIOUS CHANGES IN CLIMATE.

THE climate of any particular country is not persistently the same through a long series of years. It is liable to be affected by agricultural operations, drainage, change of ocean-currents, and other circumstances. From whatever cause, the climate of Great Britain is changing. The most noticeable fact is, that while the winters are less severe, and the summers not so intensely hot, as formerly, there has crept in what may be called a jumble of weather throughout the year. We have cold when we should expect heat, and warmth when we had every reason to look for snow. Meteorologists, who profess to speak scientifically, fail to enlighten us on the cause or causes of these phenomena. It cannot be said that, as regards the culture of grain-crops, or the rearing of cattle, sheep, and other marketable animals, there has been any falling-off. In these departments of affairs, and we may add in forest-tree culture, there has rather been an improvement than otherwise. Change of climate has been more specially demonstrated in the case of fruit, the crops of which are exceedingly liable to be damaged by unseasonable frost. Chance frosts in the later spring months are the terror of gardeners, and unfortunately the destruction so caused is becoming so serious in many places, that some kinds of well-known fruit are no longer worth cultivating. Better, it is thought, import fruit, than try to rear it.

A paragraph has been going the round of the

newspapers, regarding this mysterious change of climate as concerns Scotland. 'At a recent meeting of the Botanical Society, Mr M'Nab read a paper on "Further Evidences of Climatal Changes in Scotland," and mentioned that several old Scotch gardeners, as well as amateur cultivators, concurred with his opinion, that many varieties of fruit now cultivated in that country were by no means equal to what they were from thirty to fifty years ago. Ribston pippins and nonpareil apples are alleged to be inferior in size and flavour as well as number to the specimens formerly seen. The jargonelle pear, once extensively grown and thoroughly ripened on standard trees in various districts of Scotland, is now exceedingly scarce. The famous "Carse of Gowrie" orchards, which half a century ago were so remunerative, and in which seventy varieties of apples, and thirty-six varieties of pears, were cultivated as standards, still exist, but with a sadly diminished production of fruit. The Clydesdale orchards are in the same failing condition. The damson shews signs of becoming extinct, and the common black sloe and bramble-berries are in like manner on the decline. From the old minute-books of the Caledonian Horticultural Society, it appears that from 1810 they offered prizes for peaches grown on open walls without the aid of fire-flues; but after 1837, these were discontinued, and the generality of the competition peaches sent are grown on flued walls or in peach-houses. Similar painful evidence was given with regard to cherries, gooseberries, and Scotch-grown American cranberries; and even the filbert and hazel nuts are, it is stated, not by any means so flourishing now as formerly. From 1812 to 1826, the large white poppy was cultivated in the field in various parts of Scotland, for the making of opium; and about fifty years ago tobacco was frequently grown in certain districts. All is changed or changing now, although several winters of late years have been remarkable for their mildness, and proved most favourable for flowering-plants. The Scotch, however, cannot feed on flowers, and are much to be pitied under the calamity with which they are threatened of being dependent on our English greengrocers and fruiterers for their supplies of fruit.' It is to be hoped that these remarks will evoke more attention to the subject than it has hitherto received.

A SKETCH AT EVENING.

To eastward, where a mountain channel fills
With whitest foam refreshing to the eye,
Receding, rising, hills are piled on hills
Far back against, far up into, the sky.
And from their bases, broadening towards the west—
Far widening out e'en to the closing day,
A champagne fine as e'er by foot was prest
Stretches with one wide sweep away, away.
'Tie early eve, and o'er this region grand
Grandly the roseate sunset radiance streams
From out the cloud-barred west. Stray breezes bland
Have birth, blow past, and die; and Nature seems,
Here in this region at this hour sublime,
Favoured of earth and heaven, of fate and time.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.
Also sold by all Booksellers.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 539.

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

THE BLACK WATCH.

THE public interest lately taken in the achievements of the 42d Regiment, popularly known as the Black Watch, is no new manifestation. It has occurred on various occasions ever since this gallant military body came into existence, about a hundred and thirty-four years ago. Most British regiments of the line have a story. Each is in a sense a corporation, with its own uniform, its own emblematic devices, its own carefully preserved traditions; wherefore, from generation to generation, amidst innumerable vicissitudes and dangers, there prevails the same hereditary *esprit de corps*. One regiment is proud of having gained renown in India, another in Egypt, another in Spain or the Netherlands, and so on. Even the small matter of 'facings' is a thing of no little concern. The colours of the cuffs and collars usually date back to the origin of the regiment, and are traceable to the taste or family livery of the first colonel who embodied the corps and initiated it in its duties. All this gives a peculiar character to the component parts of the British army. The regiments, while acting together as a whole, respectively preserve their individuality and legendary honours; are not classed indistinguishably, as is the practice among continental forces.

In this way, our regiments are for the most part living memorials of moving events in history. Brought into being on some national emergency, they tell us of the past. In the Cameronians, or 26th Regiment, we are reminded of the body of active young Covenanters, raised in April 1689, to maintain the Revolution Settlement, and who, each man with a Bible in his knapsack, fought with such indomitable courage at Dunkeld as to rout the Jacobite force which had been temporarily victorious at Killiecrankie. Similarly, the Black Watch awakens reminiscences of the state of the Highlands in the early years of last century, when old clan-ship turbulence and the levying of black-mail still vexed peaceably disposed neighbours, and gave some concern to the government of George I. With a view to insuring peace, the carrying of arms

by the natives was prohibited under severe penalties. To enforce this and other obligations, six companies of loyal Highlanders, each with a captain or captain-lieutenant, were raised in 1730, principally from the clans Campbell, Grant, Munro, and Fraser. Forming no regular regiment, these companies acted independently, much in the manner of guerrilla forces—dashing from point to point among the mountains, and stamping out attempts at depredation and insurrection. The privates in this irregular body of foot-soldiers were mostly sons of land-proprietors, or higher class of farmers—men who felt themselves responsible for their conduct to honourable families, as well as to the country, for which they cherished a devoted affection. As care had been taken in their selection, they were generally tall and handsome men, with a gentlemanly bearing. Many of them had *gillies*, or servants, to attend them in their quarters, and upon the march, to carry their provisions, baggage, and firelocks. One of the coveted advantages of the service was to be entitled to bear arms and indulge in the ancient dress of the country. Their uniform consisted so much of the black, blue, and green tartan as to give them a sombre appearance, whence, in reference to their special duties, and in contradistinction to the regular troops, who were clothed entirely in red, they became known as the *Black Watch*.

Matters so continued till 1739, when, to meet fresh exigencies, George II. authorised the formation of a Highland regiment of ten companies, incorporating the six companies of the Black Watch, with John Earl of Crawford and Lindsay as colonel. The first muster of the reorganised body took place in May 1740, near Aberfeldy, in Perthshire; the regiment being recorded as the 43d, but subsequently the number was changed to the 42d, and such it has remained. An effective improvement was made in the garb. Instead of the dark tartan, the uniform was a scarlet jacket and waistcoat, with buff facings and white lace, with a tartan plaid twelve yards in length plaited round the body; the lower part answering as a kilt, and the upper part attached to the left

shoulder, but ready to be wrapped round the shoulders and firelock in rainy weather, and useful as a blanket when bivouacking in the field at night. The plaid was kept tight to the body by a belt, on which were hung a pair of pistols and a dirk, by those who chose to wear these weapons. Besides a musket and bayonet, each man had a large basket-hilted broadsword, suspended by a belt of black leather. Some carried targets, as was the fashion of their country. The cap was a woollen blue bonnet, with a border arranged in small squares of white, red, and green, to resemble, as is said, the fess choqué of the House of Stewart, with a graceful tuft of feathers. Such were the usual equipments of the regiment when on duty. For convenience, when in barracks, the plaid was laid aside, and the fillibeg, or little kilt, was worn—a piece of dress which, being of comparatively modern invention, can scarcely be said to belong to the 'garb of old Gaul.' Only one point, but a very important one, remains to be noticed. This was the *set*, or pattern of the tartan. While the companies acted independently, each commander had the tartan of his own clan. When embodied, no clan having a superior claim to offer a uniform plaid to the whole, and Lord Crawford, the colonel, being a Lowlander, a new pattern was assumed, which has ever since been known as the 42d or Black Watch tartan. Lord Crawford remained but a short time commander. On removal to the Life Guards, Brigadier-general Lord Sempill was appointed colonel. To which of the two, or if to either, the facings of the regiment are due, we have not seen stated.

No people are more tractable and orderly than the Highlanders when trusted, treated kindly, and with a proper regard to justice. 'The spirit of a Highland soldier,' as is observed by General Stewart, to whose painstaking work we are indebted for many of these particulars, 'revolts at any unnecessary severity; though he may be led to the mouth of a cannon if properly directed, and will die rather than be unfaithful to his trust. But, if instead of leading, his officers attempt to drive him, he may fail in the discharge of the most common duties.' In short, the Highland soldier must not be treated as an imbecile, but as a man of intelligence and honour, who requires no forcing to lead him to victory. Brought in face of the enemy, he knows what to do, and the duties of an officer may be said to cease. Want of a knowledge of these characteristics, led the government at the time we speak of, and more recently, into some serious errors. Highland regiments who would have fought to the death if treated with any degree of discretion, were on several occasions brought into a condition of mutiny by sheer mismanagement. Something of this sort occurred with the Black Watch in its newly embodied form. From anything said to the regiment, the notion entertained was, that it was to remain essentially a defensive local force. The men enlisted on that understanding. Hence, there arose an unhappy incident. In 1743, the regiment, a little against its will, was marched to London, and while there, a rumour was circulated that it was to be sent abroad. Indignant at what was deemed a breach of contract, and no considerate explanation being given, the men marched off northwards. By some persuasions, they were induced to return to the metropolis, where a few examples were made, to

maintain discipline; and ever afterwards, through judicious management, no regiment fulfilled its duties more faithfully, or with greater *éclat*, in any part of the world.

The first scene of its foreign exploits was in Flanders, to which, under the name of Sempill's Highlanders, the regiment was despatched to take part in the war with France, which began in 1744, and closed in 1748. It arrived too late for the battle of Dettingen, and being for a time quartered in Flanders, its behaviour gave the highest satisfaction. The men gained the good opinion of the inhabitants, who expressed their anxious desire to have a Highland soldier quartered in each of their houses, 'as these men were not only quiet, kind, and domestic, but served as a protection against the rudeness of others.' While abroad, Lord Sempill was appointed to the 25th, being succeeded by Lord John Murray, son of the Duke of Atholl. Under the name of Murray's Highlanders, the regiment distinguished itself at the battle of Fontenoy, April 30, 1745. It was a bad business. There was a failure on the part of the Dutch allies, and Marshal Saxe gained a victory over the Duke of Cumberland, brother of George III. According to the Culloden Papers, Murray's Highlanders were 'the only regiment that could be kept to its duty.' On this memorable occasion, the regiment was commanded by Lieutenant-colonel Sir Robert Munro of Foulis, chief of his name and clan. The chaplain of the regiment was Mr Adam Ferguson, afterwards a professor in the university of Edinburgh, and father of Sir Adam, the life-long friend of Sir Walter Scott. It is mentioned that when the regiment was taking its ground on the morning of the battle, Sir Robert Munro perceived the chaplain in the ranks, and with a friendly caution, told him there was no necessity to expose himself to danger, and that he ought to be out of the line of fire. Mr Ferguson thanked Sir Robert for his friendly advice, but added that he had a duty which he was imperiously called upon to perform. Accordingly, he continued with the regiment during the whole of the action, in the hottest of the fire, praying with the dying, attending to the wounded, directing them to be carried to a place of safety; circumstances which greatly endeared him to all members of the corps. The deeds of daring were remarkable. One of the Highlanders, named Campbell, killed nine Frenchmen with his broadsword, and while aiming a blow at a tenth, had his arm carried away by a cannon-ball. The Duke of Cumberland, who saw him drop, nominated him a lieutenant on the spot; his portrait was engraved, and there was scarcely a village throughout England but had the walls of its cottages decorated with the representation of this warlike Celt.

We have not space to follow the Black Watch through its momentous history. Recalled from the continent, it was engaged in several battles to suppress the Rebellion of 1745. Next, it found some work during the Seven Years' War, beginning with Ticonderoga, on Lake Champlain, in 1750, in which war it lost altogether twenty-seven officers and three hundred and eighty-four rank and file. Pressed by the united forces of France and Spain, and by the hostilities of Hyder Ali in India, the government (now fully alive to the value of Highland soldiers) added a second battalion to the 42d regiment, which was embodied at Perth.

In the hapless American war, the regiment

performed prodigies of valour in fourteen battles and skirmishes, the last of them at Yorktown, in Virginia, in 1781, when the colonies were given up as lost. Pity it is that, by the blundering policy of the period, the bravery of these Highlanders was so grievously misexpended! Then came the French Revolutionary war, in which, from its commencement in 1793 till its close in 1814, the 42d fought in seventeen battles. Some of its heaviest affairs were in Egypt, to check the unwarrantable encroachments of Bonaparte. Returning home covered with glory, and numbers of the men with the loss of an eye, from the glare and sand of the desert, the regiment was received with enthusiasm at several public entertainments. Not long afterwards, it was employed in the Peninsular campaigns, fighting battle after battle, at Corunna, Salamanca, Burgos, &c. In this protracted French war, the Black Watch lost more men in killed and wounded than its original numerical force, and only kept the field by recruiting. With scarcely a breathing-time, ensued the battles of Quatre Bras and Waterloo, in June 1815, and here there were fresh laurels and fresh losses. Again returning home, there was a repetition of enthusiastic receptions, and public banquets.

From the close of that terrific struggle with Bonaparte until the Crimean war, the 42d was occupied much in the manner of other troops, sometimes at home, sometimes in distant possessions. In the Crimean affair, they had some arduous work at Alma and Sevastopol—1854-5. Their next operations were in India, to aid in quelling the Mutiny, of 1857. There, as is well remembered, the regiment displayed extraordinary endurance and gallantry in the capture of Lucknow and rescue of unhappy prisoners. Unwillingly passing over a record of deeds which might fill a volume, we arrive at the latest achievements of the Black Watch; in the Ashantee war, in the early part of the present year. This African campaign, undertaken to compel the king of Ashantee to refrain from molesting tribes on the coast who claimed British protection, was conducted with consummate skill by Sir Garnet Wolseley. The forces were not numerous. Among them was only a portion of the 42d, commanded by Colonel Macleod. Encountering a pestilential climate, and a wily and treacherous foe concealed in dense forests, through which pathways had to be excavated, the difficulties of the expedition were enormous. Yet, all were successfully overcome. We need not dwell on particulars within the recollection of every one. In the principal battle, fought at Amoafu, on the 31st January, the Highlanders marching with their bagpipes playing, drove all before them, the engagement being ably supported by other branches of the service. Following up these successes, the troops captured Coomassie, the capital of the country, and secured the submission of the king. The brilliant feats of the Black Watch in this African war almost more than sustained the well-won reputation of the corps; and correspondingly great has been the acclaim of admiration in England.

Our too brief narrative is concluded. The Black Watch are once more at home to recruit, preparatory to new exploits wherever the fortune of war may lead them. They bear the royal cipher within the garter of St Andrew, and the national motto, *Nemo me impune lacessit* (No one touches me with im-

punity), along with names of places commemorative of transactions to which we have imperfectly referred — Egypt, Corunna, Fuentes d'Onor, Pyrenees, Nivelle, Nive, Orthes, Toulouse, Peninsula, Waterloo, Alma, Sevastopol, Lucknow; and to these will now properly be added Ashantee, for nowhere was the fearless steadiness, bravery, and sense of responsibility of the Black Watch more clearly or more gratifyingly demonstrated.

W. C.

THE WISHED-FOR SAW-MILL.

IN one of my angling excursions, I went, by the advice of my knowing friend Nibbs, to try the small river Toft, which runs through a pretty bit of country, and has on its banks the village, or more properly hamlet of Whortle, where I took up my residence. The place had no inn, but that did not matter. Anglers are not particular as to lodgings. The cottage which gave me shelter was clean and comfortable enough; Mrs Williams, a motherly dame, had good store of sweet linen, and made capital bread. There was a difficulty about butcher-meat; but sides of bacon were suspended all over the kitchen ceiling, eggs were reckoned by the dozen, chickens and ducks were chuckling and quacking all around, excellent vegetables grew in the garden; and for fish, in my opinion, small river-trout are almost as nice to eat as to catch, which is saying a great deal.

I took a letter from Nibbs, and was installed in his accustomed quarters, for I found that he was in the habit of running down for a few days whenever business permitted him, and several books arranged on the shelf of the sitting-room had his name in them. I feared at first that I was turning the couple out of their parlour, but they assured me that they only used it on grand occasions, and lived habitually in the kitchen. My bedroom was over the sitting-room; and from the lattice window, framed with jessamine and roses, I could see the little river as it ran babbling and sparkling by. There was only one drawback, which was the close proximity of the workshop, in which either my host or his workman was constantly sharpening a saw; but even this was not an unmixed evil, for it conduced to that early rising which is so great a point in the angler's favour.

Nibbs had said 'old' Peter Williams, and I expected something venerable, but the term proved to be familiar rather than descriptive, for Williams was not much older than Nibbs himself, and he was born in 1820. Mrs Williams was perhaps a couple of years younger. I was puzzled at first to think where the work was to come from to keep a carpenter in such an out-of-the-way spot, but that difficulty was soon solved. There were a good many houses hidden away amongst the woods within a circuit of two or three miles, and there was no competition. Gentlemen residing about there were, indeed, I afterwards learned, rather addicted to amateur carpentering, a taste doubtless fostered by the profusion of wood all around; but amateur work rarely interferes with professional. Peter was probably saved many a little fidgety and unprofitable job by the skill of his neighbours, but was rarely done out of a good one. It seldom occurs to a gentleman to supply his own household with coffins, for example.

Still, the business was fluctuating; at some times more than Peter and his assistant could well get through, at others so slack that the man could make head against it, leaving the master free to indulge in the pursuit he loved; and with him fly-fishing was a passion. When any sport, taste, or affection fills the soul of a man to that extent, however, he is certain to find some way of gratifying it under any circumstances. Though my host had plenty to do at the period of my visit, he was evidently glad enough of the excuse for acting as my cicerone to throw aside the plane for the rod for an hour or so; and he generally managed to accompany me a little way up or down the stream either in the morning or the evening. And it was lucky for me he did so, for it was a difficult piece of water to fish, but he knew every inch of it. Without his aid, and using the ordinary flies, I should soon have quitted the neighbourhood in disgust. As it was, I had capital sport.

And what was equally pleasant, when I came home, I had such a good welcome. It is a very great addition to the enjoyment of the amateur fisherman to display his spoils before a sympathetic gaze, and Peter Williams met me with the eagerness of a child expecting a new toy. I durst not have brought home an under-sized fish; it would have hurt his feelings. He admired any trout larger than the average, as though he had never seen such a thing before; weighed it, measured it, and wanted to know exactly where and how it was captured. Mrs Williams was equally frank and friendly; and when I found that I should be welcome, I proposed to come and smoke my pipe with the couple in the kitchen of an evening. They soon grew chatty and communicative, and I learned that they had a sorrow.

It was on the third occasion of my passing the evening in their company that I asked whether Hackle always came alone, and if he never brought a friend with him.

'Never, sir,' replied Mrs Williams emphatically. 'I don't know where he could be put up.'

'Why,' said I, 'you have another bedroom at the back of mine; the door was open when I came down to dinner, and it looked very comfortably furnished. Could you not put a second visitor there?'

Mrs Williams knitted more quickly at the sock she was making, and offered no reply; her husband puffed hard at his pipe. I saw that I had touched on a painful subject, but could not immediately turn to another, so there was an awkward pause.

'You see, sir,' said Peter at last, knocking out his ashes, 'the old woman would not have that room occupied on any account, because it was John's, and she is always expecting John to come back. I know better, but mothers never stop hoping.'

'I don't hope,' said his wife, taking off her spectacles and wiping her eyes. 'I am certain sure that my boy will come back to see us, if it is only for a few days, and then, when he finds everything just as he left it, maybe he will stop longer.'

'Very likely,' said I. 'It would never do, I see, to have lodgers.'

'Children's all alike,' said Peter. 'You nurse them and coddle them, and work and plan for them, and all you get is ingratitude. They are just like the birds; soon as they can fly alone, they are off. I don't say our John is worse than the

rest, or so bad as many, for he has never disgraced us—only forgotten us.'

'Don't say that, Peter,' sobbed his wife. 'I'll never believe it.'

'Well, I hope I am wrong; but I'm not. He has got hold of some pink-faced girl, and doesn't care a farthing for any one else in the world. They are all like that at his age.'

'Does he never write?' I asked, feeling awkward, but wishing to shew an interest.

'Yes, he writes now and then, not often. Why should he? He knows my wishes, and is determined to have his own way.'

'You are hard upon him, Peter,' said Mrs Williams. 'Young people have their way to make in the world.'

'I know that, old woman; but he might have made it here.'

'You see, sir, he is uncommon clever at carving, and that sort of work fetches a high price just now; it's the fashion, where they are doing up old churches and the like; that's what tempted the lad away.'

'Perhaps,' said I, 'he felt that his talent was being wasted in a place where he had no particular object upon which to exercise it.'

'Maybe, sir; but he knew that I had set my heart on the saw-mill all my life, and that I could not work it, if I got it, now without his help; he understood well enough, too, that it would be a better business for himself than working for wages, however high they may be, and a nice retirement for me in my old age. But that is just it, I expect; he did not fancy having for partner an old father, who might soon be getting past his work, though there is no sign of that about me at present, thank Heaven!'

'Ah,' said I, 'you were thinking of setting up a saw-mill? It certainly ought to be a good place for one.'

'It ought, and it is, sir,' replied Peter Williams, growing excited. And then he entered into many lengthened particulars, of which this is the sum. The saw-mill was an existing institution, at present in the possession of a Mr Tankard, better known as Drunken Tommy, who was willing to cede his lease, good-will, and fixtures for one hundred pounds, and would probably take eighty. That sounds an absurd trifle to give for a saw-mill, but you must remember that the Toft is a very little stream, and its water-power quite Lilliputian. Drunken Tommy did not make much of an income after he had paid his rent. But then he confined himself strictly to the sawing of trees into planks, and was indolent about that. An active, intelligent, well-educated man, who combined the carpentering business, or rather made the saw-mill subservient to it, might expect a very different result. And I could see that this was only part of Mr Williams' belief as to the advantages to be derived from his pet project, and that he dreamed ambitious dreams of becoming a timber-merchant. And to think that fortune, in a small way, was to be missed for want of a hundred pounds!

Could he not have borrowed that sum? Ay, he could; but that was where he and his son John had their first disagreement. John would have nothing to say to borrowing; and without the young man's cleverness, activity, and clear head for business, the father could not see his way. And so they parted, not in anger, indeed,

but in coolness, considering that John was an only child, and had lived on terms of perfect affection with his parents up to that date. Nor could it be said that he left them capriciously, without good reasons; for having sent a specimen of carving to a famous firm, who were engaged in restoring a cathedral, he received an offer of employment, the terms of which might well dazzle a young country artificer. This happened three years before, and they had not seen him since. At first, his letters had been very regular, but gradually they grew less so, and now they had not heard from him for nearly three months.

I did not learn all this at one interview, for the couple interrupted one another, and confused the account, in addition to which, they persisted in assuming that I had a certain amount of previous knowledge, which I did not possess. However, when the ice was once broken, they often reverted to the subject of their self-willed son, and by degrees I got a connected narrative.

I had originally intended to limit my stay at Whortle to a week; but the quiet homeliness of the place suited me so exactly, that a fortnight slipped by almost before I was aware. I was not fishing all the time; there were two days of east wind, and three of unceasing rain, which, with a couple of Sundays, reduced my actual period of sport one half. Still I was not dull, for, as a rule, no man, is so happy in his own society as the angler. But I made the unfavourable weather which had intervened an excuse for allowing myself one week more, at the expiration of which I determined that I *must* leave, lest I should be keeping Nibbs out of his favourite haunt.

On the last evening but one, I hooked the largest fish I had yet raised. As Nibbs had told me, the Toft was a difficult river to fish, in consequence of the bushes which fringed the banks on each side. These concealed you, indeed, so that you could only throw a very short line; and when you hooked a trout, the method of securing him was to wind up till he was only about four feet from the top of the rod, and then lift him out clear of the boughs. But on the present occasion I could not do this, the fish being of a weight which would have smashed either rod or line to a certainty; and Peter was not there to assist me. So I played the trout, following him gently down the stream, and looking out for a clear spot to land him at. Fortunately (I mean for me), he was very firmly hooked.

'You have got a good one, sir,' said a voice—not Peter's—at my elbow.

'Ay,' I replied; 'if I only knew how to get him out of the water.'

'I think I can help you,' said he.

'I have no landing-net.'

'Never mind; I can get down to the water's edge through that bush; play him up to me, and I will slip my cap under him.'

This was effected; and in less than a minute the speckled beauty was leaping before us in the grass.

'There are not many of his size in this stream,' said my friend in need. 'I doubt whether my father ever took a heavier out of it.'

I looked at him; he was a handsome young man, with a broad forehead, bright gray eyes, and a rather massive jaw.

'Is your name Williams?' I asked, rather abruptly.

'Yes,' said he, looking up, surprised.

'I am lodging at your father's house,' I explained.

'All well?' he asked.

'Quite.'

'And I am anxious to see *them*,' so I will say good-day for the present, sir,' and he strode off with an elastic step.

I delayed my return beyond my usual dinner-time, and stole into the house somewhat sheepishly; a great joy is almost as sacred as a great sorrow. When Mrs Williams brought me my food, I made a sort of half apology for taking her away from her son, and hoped his visit would be a long one.

'Life-long, I hope, sir,' she replied, fairly laughing with delight. 'He has been getting three pounds a week great part of the time, and has saved enough money to buy the saw-mill. That was why he left us, because he knew that his father would never be happy unless he had his fancy. But he would not tell us what he was up to at first, because he was not sure of succeeding, and feared disappointing us. And later, when it was all right, he could not deny himself the pleasure of a surprise.'

I have had a week on the Toft quite lately. Drunken Tommy has ceded the mill to Williams and Son, who have improved the business considerably already. I had several chats with both, and found that each retained his original opinion.

'John is a very good lad,' said Peter; 'first-rate; there is no better in England. But he cannot see that those three years have been so much time lost. We could have repaid the hundred pounds principal and interest at the end of the first year.'

'I'll never start on borrowed money while I can earn a crust, though the chance be ever so tempting,' said John. 'The interest eats up your profit, and that breaks your heart. And then, if you go ill, or have a turn of bad luck, where are you? We've got the saw-mill, and the comfort of knowing that we have never been in debt, or owed it to the favour of any one.'

EXOTIC ENGLISH.

FIFTY years ago, 'Here they spike the English!' was an announcement to be seen in many a Parisian shop-window. How they did 'spike' it may be guessed from the manner in which they wrote it, sundry specimens of the Gallic-English current in Paris in 1822 being preserved in the pages of the *Mirror* of that year. M. Oliver, the Houdin of the day, promised, in his bills, to perform 'an infinity of Legerdemains worthy to excite the curiosity of spectators,' such as, 'the cut and burnt handkerchieves who shall take up their primitive poms, the watch thrown up et nailed against the wall by a pistol-shot, the enchanted glass wine, the handsome Elisina in her trunek; and some 'low automations who will dance up on a rope and sell do the most difficult tricks;' concluding with a Pantasmagory disposed in a manner as not to frighten the ladies. At a restaurant in the Palais-Royal, 'Macaroni not baked sooner ready' was to be obtained; and a hairdresser in the Rue St-Honoré sought to attract the wandering Briton by proclaiming: 'Hear to cut off here in English fashion.' The proprietor of the Montesquieu Baths issued a card notifying all it might concern: 'As for the brothes, liquid or any breakfast, and, in one word, all other things relatives to the service of the

bathes, the Persons will be so good as to direct themselves to the servant bathers, who will satisfy them with the greatest attention.' The public is invited not to search to displace the suckets and the swan necks, in order to forbear the accidents which may result of is, in not calling the servant bathers to his aid. The servant bathers, in consequence of having no wages, desire the bathers do not forget them.' The last clause is plain English enough. Those who desired clean linen as well as clean skins might command the services of Madame Cauraz—'washerwoman and washes embroideries, lace, gazes, silk-stockings, also household's furniture's in linen table cloths, napkins, and calenders all at one's desire; she will also charge herself of the entertaining the works that is to be done to all sorts of linen for the body, and will be exactly delivered at one's desire.'

It may be doubted whether the Frenchmen of to-day are capable of expressing their ideas in much better English than were their fathers and grand-fathers; indeed they seem to have still odder notions as to what is good English. No example given above is worse than 'workshops are moved by steam,' or 'hot, cold, and shower bats on the premmioses;' not one is so bad as 'Thases prices its not ervaluable wen they vegetable erres news,' intended for, 'These prices do not hold good when the vegetables are out of season;' and not one is so unintelligible as 'Delaponte, propriotor of the Scie a Rubans, said the endless saw, fit to the sawing of the madriers, planks thin, boards, augar, &c;' or 'articulation without swipe'—mysterious words of praise applied to a weighing-machine. A certain new-fashioned inkstand may possibly be an article no gentleman's library should be without, but we learn little of its merits by being told, 'People wishes to sell out at very good condition this patent right, which would offer much profit to those who would try to value it;' nor should we be inclined to speculate in a patent bathing-girdle so artfully combined that 'the person, the bathing-tub, and the machine are forming one inseparable piece!' The purchaser of a 'Proliferous Top' would hardly know what to do with it, lacking more lucid instructions than these: Roll the string in the pulley and draw; put the mother top, which is then in motion, on the little ones which are scattered about purposely one after the other; it is sufficient for putting them in movement; count numbers brought. The top goes in every manner that is wished according to the chances of positions or the skill of persons. It is a pity one should not understand all about this wonderful invention; for another tradesman assures us, 'the proliferous top is not only an attractive toy, an agreeable pass time, it is also a healthy and instructive exercise, for the reason that it provokes in a certain measure a material and intellectual work; the importance of which may not be perceived at first sight by shallow minds; but which, nevertheless, will have its influence on the physical and moral development of the child. Moreover, this toy is the ingenious work of a learned physician, who has travelled in various countries, and has for a long time meditated on the causes and effects which have the most influence on human organization with regards both to health and intelligence.' George Robins himself could not have done better.

A Spanish blacking-maker, an exhibitor at the French Exhibition of 1867, issued the following

challenge to manufacturers of boot-polish: 'The First of Andalucia.—Grand Manufactory of Blacking, oely and resinous, titled the Emperor of the Blackings. Black Ink, and all colours to write with of D. Joseph Grau, Member of the National Academy of Great Britain, rovoarded in the Sevillan Exhibition of 1858, and that of London in 1862. Spain: Andalucia; Seville O'donnell Street N. 34. This blackings is knoconed to be the most useful for the conservation of the shes, for its brillianey, solidity, permanency, flexibility, and complete discomposition of the black animal. Mr Grau dus a present of L.20 sterling to the person that will present hum a blacking in paste that will reunite the same conditions as the Emperor of the Blackings.' We should be glad to know the whereabouts of the blacking-maker's National Academy, and a little information as to the nature of the black animal he manages to discompose, would be acceptable; and we should like to taste Herr Holzer's 'wine and tea stake,' distinguished by its aroma, swift dissolubility, and his property to advance the digestion, and which doubtless 'is extra, ordinary fitted for being taken with wine, tea, and punch,' particularly if accompanied with Simon's 'finest children biscuits,' unless the tea-stako is itself a tea-cake.

It is nothing unusual for a man to criticise what he does not understand, but only a Frenchman could have the presumption to pass judgment upon a poet like Pope, while he could not quote a line of his correctly, turning, for instance, 'Be pleased with nothing, if not blessed with all,' into, 'Be pleased with a nothing, is no blessed with all;' and, 'Tis nowhere to be found, or everywhere,' into, 'Tis ne where to be found ot everivohere.' Even Chateaubriand must make nonsense of sense when quoting a verse from a well-known song, and write—

If the wind tempestuous blowing,
Still no danger they desory,
The guiltless heart its boom bestowing
Soothes them with its lolly boy.

Chateaubriand's blunder was absurd enough, but excusable in comparison with the mistakes perpetrated by the editor of the *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, who tells his readers Charles Dickens wrote 'The posthumous papers of the Pickwick-club,' 'Olivier Twist,' 'Chuzzlevil,' 'Christmas Carol,' 'Cricket on the Earth,' and 'Dombey and his Son.'

A French count, writing to a friend of Charles Young the actor, said: 'Be not surpriz'd i write so perfectly well in English, but since i am here, i speak and hear speaking all the day English, and during the nights, if some rats or mouses trouble me, i tell them Go ion, and they obey, understanding perfectly my English.' Possibly that sentence was a surprise, coming after 'almost every day the funder is rolling upon our head with noise that should faint you, being as coward as a turkey.' The count, we may be sure, never intended to call his correspondent a coward. Further on he blunders into insulting a lady—'i have receive at this moment a letter from Lady S——, i put my thanks at her feet as the post go at two o'clock. I have not time to write to her ladyship, but i will comply soon with the liberty she gave me. Be sure that i have not forgot Lady S—— in my prayers, though not so good as i could wish indeed. Believe the faithful

friendship that I feel for you, my dear sister-in-law, since that you were so much high than my finger.' The count must surely have been beguiled by one of those funny books issued abroad for the benefit of students desirous of becoming acquainted with the mysteries of the English language—blind leaders of the blind indeed. Here is a little anecdote from one of them. 'A lady, which was to dine, chid to her servant that she had not used butter enough. This girl, for the excuse him selves, was bring a little cat on her hand, and told that she came to take him in the crime, finishing to eat the two pounds from butter who remain. The lady took immediately the cat, was put into the balances, it had not weighed theat one an half pound.' Still better is this: 'The Scarron poet, being almost to die, told their servants which were weeping a bout a from her bed: "My children, you have shed too many tears; you shall not weep as much as I had done to laugh." Under the very appropriate heading of 'Idiotisms,' we find some old friends disguised almost beyond recognition, among them: Every one for him, and God for all.—It wants to speak of the rope a in the house of the hanged.—He is beggar as a church rat.—A thing is tell, and another thing is make.—To good appetite is not want any sauce.—Keep the chestnut of the fire with the cat foot.—Times is money.—Which looks for, find.—To dig of fire and to fall on small coals.—Take the occasion for the hairs.—Which not risk nothing has anything.—So many go the jar to spring, than at last rest there.—The stone as roll, not heap up foam. When foreigners display such ingenuity in inventing new readings, it is time our own Shakspearean commentators should look to their laurels.

The natives of India appear to be adepts in saying exactly what they do not mean. A Madrassee clerk besought a day's holiday, because he was unfortunately ill, by a singular dispensation, his ailment being 'fever and grapes.' A petitioner for a place promised, if his petition were granted, that he and his would ever cease to pray to the humble Almighty to shower his blessings upon their benefactor's head; and a Punjab schoolmaster proved how admirably he was qualified for teaching the rising generation the language of their rulers, by inditing the following letter to an English gentleman: 'HON. SIR—I am most anxious to hear you are sick. I pray to God to see you soon at R—— in a state of triumph. The climate is very good and proves unhealthy. No deputy commissioner complains ever for want of climate. If you also come here, I think it will agree with your state. An information expectant or reversionary respecting your recovery state is expected, and I shall be thankful to you.' Not much more lucid was the notice posted in a Lahore hotel, a couple of years ago: 'Gentlemen who come in hotel not say anything about their meals they will be charged for, and if they should say beforehand that they are going out to breakfast or dinner, are if they say that they not have anything to eat, they will be charged, and if not so, they will be charged, or, unless they bring it to the notice of the manager, and should they want to say anything, they must order the manager for, and not any one else, and unless they not bring it to the notice of the manager, they will be charged for the least things according to hotel rate, and no fuss will be allowed afterward about it. Should any gentleman take

wall-lamp or candle-light from the public rooms, they must pay for it without any dispute its charges. Monthly gentlemen will have to pay my fixed rate made with them at the time, and should they absent day in the month, they will not be allowed to deduct anything out of it, because I take from them less rate than my usual rate of monthly charges.' However shaky our Lahore host's English may be, it is clear that he conducted his business upon precisely the same principle as his British brethren in the main.

We do not know if English is, henceforth, to be the official language in Japan; if it is so decreed, we may look for better examples of Japanese English than—'The trees cutting, birds and beasts killing, and cows and horses setting on fire at the ground belonging to the government are prohibited.—(Signed) OSAKA FU;' but it is not so bad for a beginning. Some extraordinary specimens of exotic English are to be gathered in China, but we might seek long ere we found a stranger jumble of undoubted English words than a Notice issued by a sweetmeat-maker named Yeck Chee.—'Notice. The undersigned of Kingloong to manufacture the Best quality of Sweetmeats, Soy, &c. Which is composed of the finest materials, formerly for sold by the merchant of Loanqua during many years, and renowned between the farthest and the nearest. At present, the Loanqua is on leave a trust because he was deceitful and loss of the payment, hereafter for sale the sweetmeats, but by the Kingloong self, as in his own signed request that all patronize of the gentlemen to inspect the undersigned. Whoever should be mistaken to the counterfeit goods from Loanqua, it will surely not concerning of Kingloong.—KINGLOONG (Signed).—The New Merchant is Yeck Chee.'

A NIGHT IN THE JUNGLE.

In the year 18—I was shooting in the Kimidy district with my friend, Jack Waldron, a subaltern in a regiment of Madras Native Infantry. Kimidy is a little native town in the north of the Madras Presidency, and is situated among some jungly hills that have long been famous for the game to be found upon them. The inhabitants are a far handsomer race than the people to be met with on the plains, and the men have a singular practice of wearing flowers in their hair, which gives them a somewhat effeminate appearance, not unlike that noticeable in the natives of Ceylon. At the time of our visit—which was many years ago—a semi-independent rajah ruled over the Kimidy country, and he was supported in his authority by two companies of our own native infantry, detached from the neighbouring military station of Chicacole for the purpose.

Although buried alive, as it were, in the jungle, the English officers of this detachment usually preferred Kimidy to headquarters at Chicacole, for the shooting was excellent, and at the time of which I speak, the cost of living there was absurdly cheap. A whole sheep could be purchased for about a shilling; a fowl for fourpence; milk, butter, eggs, &c. for the merest trifle; so that the officers who were thus rusticated could live very well on a small portion of their pay, and lay by the remainder to purchase steps in the regiment, or to pay off their debts, according to their fancies. Then the thick jungle that closely

encircled the place was full of game, both great and small. One was often awaked in the morning by the crowing of the wild jungle-cocks and the screams of the pea-fowl in the immediate vicinity of the station; and wild hogs would enter the gardens of the officers at night, and commit sad havoc with the English vegetables that were planted there. Spotted deer, and the Sambur, or Indian elk, were very numerous upon the jungly hills about the place; and a bear could generally be found within ten minutes' walk of the station by those who cared to look for him with beaters. Lastly, there were tigers and leopards in these teeming jungles, but these animals were not often met with close at hand—they preferred to reside at a little distance from the military.

In such a paradise of sport, it might be supposed that the time would pass very pleasantly for men fond of shooting; but, unluckily, there was one drawback to the delights of life at Kimidy, and that was a very serious one—the sportsman stood more than a fair chance of contracting a jungle-fever. This terrible Indian disease stalked as gloomily and as stealthily through the hot steaming jungles as the tiger himself, and few men were so fortunate as to escape an acquaintance with the grim distemper, sooner or later, if their sporting tastes led them constantly into the jungles. Then the victim to fever would be drenched with quinine by the doctor until he was more than half-dead, and such singings in his ears would arise from the drug as would remind him of shells placed close to the tympanum; but spite of every remedy in the pharmacopoeia, the disease would usually retain a tight hold of the patient unless he could get a change of air, and a holiday at the sea-side. Pooree, upon the eastern coast of India, was the usual place to which invalids from Kimidy betook themselves, and a very miserable place it was to become convalescent in, but then it was the sea-side, and that was everything. Let the reader picture to himself a great waste of glaring yellow sand, diversified only with a long line of mounds of the same arid substance along the sea-shore, and he will have a fair idea of Pooree. On one of these mounds was perched that most melancholy looking of architectural erections, an Indian public bungalow; and some old rickety heaps of brick and mortar in the neighbourhood, spoke of a time long distant, when the liverless and the weary from Calcutta used to visit Pooree occasionally as a sort of sanitarium, and bathe and play cards there by turns the live-long day. Along the coast-line northwards, one sees a patch of green, with lofty pagoda towers rising above the trees, and this is the world-famous Juggernaut, at whose shrine, pilgrims from all parts of India come to worship in thousands, carrying cholera with them as they go, and spreading the plague over every road they travel. The great car of Juggernaut no longer crushes the life out of the devotees; but for one that the car killed in old times, the cholera slays hundreds in our own, and one shudders at the very sight of a place so full of wretched memories. Indeed, I doubt if a more melancholy spot is to be found upon the globe's surface than this same Pooree. As if the land was not lugubrious enough, the ocean adds its weight to the depressing influences of the place, and rolls its great waves with such sad and monotonous music on the shore, that I cannot think of it even

at this distance of time without a sensation of disquietude. The rickety Venetian blinds of the public bungalow, which rattled incessantly day and night with the strong sea-breeze; the roar of the surf in the still hours of the night; the rheumatic bungalow sepy, who could never find anything for breakfast or dinner but fowls and eggs; the ghostly houses of the Calcutta nabobs, deserted and in ruins; the distant sail upon the far horizon—an event in one's life—the two or three old tattered books that had been left with the sepy by some sick Sahib that had died: all come freshly to my recollection, as I recall the few days that I spent at Pooree.

Well, Jack Waldron and I got rather tired after a time of shooting bears and pea-fowl; and before our month's leave of absence from a certain station had expired, proposed to visit Juggernaut, the opportunity being a good one. Besides this, I was feeling rather unwell, and feared an attack of jungle-fever, for which the sea-air was presumed to be an excellent remedy; and as Pooree is no great distance—from an Anglo-Indian point of view—from Kimidy, we settled to go down there one night in the palanquins we had brought with us from the south.

It was the Indian cold weather at this time, and the air was sufficiently chilly to make a blanket agreeable at night, so Jack and I looked forward to a comfortable sleep as we got into our respective palanquins about eight o'clock in the evening, having prepared ourselves for a good snooze, it must be acknowledged, with sundry bottles of pale ale, and a *doch-an-dorrah* in the shape of some brandy and soda-water at the hospitable mess of the detachment above alluded to. Soda-water was a rare article in Kimidy, for it had to be conveyed a long distance in bullock-carts; but the detachment officers gave us of their best in the way of dinner and liquor, so that we felt in very good-humour when the bearers took the palanquins on their shoulders, and set off for Pooree with that long sling trot peculiar to them, singing as they went in no dulcet strains. Waldron's palanquin went first, and mine followed. It was pitch-dark, but the moon was expected to rise about midnight, and in the meantime we were provided with two men carrying torches of burning rags, on which they threw oil from time to time. I lay awake for an hour or so, smoking Trichinopoly cheroots, and watching the curious and picturesque effects of the light thrown by the torches on our party and on the jungle skirting the road-side; but at length I fell asleep, to dream that I was on my way to England in a steamer, which was pitching most tremendously, just at that moment, in the very centre of the Bay of Biscay. I was awaked by a chattering among the bearers, and looking at my watch, saw that it was ten minutes past twelve, and that the moon was rising. We had stopped at a public bungalow by the road-side, and close to a village, in which there seemed to be a great deal of *tom-tomming* and noise going on. Waldron had got out of his palanquin, and was talking to the bearers, who were greatly excited. Just then, he came to me with a very grave face. 'This is awkward,' he said: 'there is cholera very bad in the village, and our bearers, are in such a precious funk, that I am afraid they will run back to Kimidy. What's to be done?'

'We must get on at any price,' I replied; 'it

would never do to stop here all night.—Here! Palkee Ootaw, Juldee Jao' (Lift the palanquin, and go on quick), I cried in Hindustani to the men. But the bearers would not lift the palanquins from the ground, in spite of all our threats and entreaties, until we consented to give them a present of one rupee each, and even then, three or four of them disappeared, and were seen no more, leaving us short-handed for the next stage of the journey. At last, and with no little difficulty, we got under weigh once more, the bearers grumbling greatly all the time, and evidently proceeding very much against the grain. We still maintained our old order of march, and whatever my companion's sensations may have been under the circumstances, I know that I, for my part, was very glad indeed when we passed the village, and heard the last of the tom-toms and cholera horns, with which the unfortunate villagers were striving to drive the demon of pestilence out of their borders. I am as little afraid of cholera, I hope, as any man. In India, one gets so accustomed to hear of this plague, and even to witness its ravages, that the imagination becomes dulled to its terrors; and as, in England, people live and amuse themselves without much thought of diphtheria, so, in the East, a man does not trouble himself much about cholera until he has got it. But even the boldest would hardly, from choice, care to remain in a plague-stricken village without any medicines at hand, and that, too, in the middle of the night, and at a time when the nerves are perhaps more unstrung than at any other period of the twenty-four hours; consequently, I was glad, I repeat, to get away from the place, and lit a cheroot, feeling it impossible to go to sleep directly after the noise and vexation of the disturbance with our bearers.

It was close upon one o'clock then, and the moon shone brightly at times through the fleecy clouds, that were gliding swiftly across its disk, before the force of the north-east monsoon. One of our torch-bearers had vanished, and the other had allowed his torch to go out, from carelessness or fright, but this did not much signify, as there was sufficient moonlight for the bearers to see the road, that is to say if a rutty track through the jungle could with any sense of propriety be termed a road. It was beautiful bamboo jungle that we were travelling through, and for a long time I gave myself up to watching, with much interest, the graceful waving clumps of that gigantic cane, as we passed them slowly; the bearers stumbling and kicking their way over ruts and stones with doleful groans, and grunts full of misery. I thought to myself, What a fine place for pea-fowl we must be in; and then recollecting that pea-fowl and tigers are not uncommonly found together, I began to wonder if there were any of the striped gentry prowling in the forest; for, although the word jungle is here used in the common acceptation of the Indian term, which embraces everything arborescent, from the mightiest forests to the most insignificant brushwood, it was, in fact, a bamboo forest we were in, with forest glades to the right and left of the road, and having dunes of extraordinary girth and loftiness, even for that part of India. Smoking, and looking out of the palanquin window, in the faint hope of discovering some wild animal crossing the glades in the moonlight, I must have almost unconsciously got a pretty good idea of the road, for I remembered it

generally distinctly enough afterwards, when I had to travel it under less comfortable circumstances. But there were no wild animals to be seen of the kind I was looking for. Jackals raised their unearthly cry now and then in the recesses of the jungle, and the great horned owl flitted across the road from one patch of bamboo to another; but of tigers there was no sign, which was just as well, considering that we had left our guns and rifles at Kimidy, waiting our return, and had not even a pistol between us. It was hard to get any information out of the bearers regarding the character of the road, for they spoke Telegu, and had but a very slight acquaintance with Hindustani; and besides this, they were sulky, so that having tried to get some information from them in vain, I gave it up as a bad job, and throwing away the end of my cheroot, composed myself to sleep again.

I don't think I could have slept more than half an hour, when I was awaked this time by the renewed clamour of the bearers, who, crowding about the door of my palanquin, which they had allowed to fall roughly on the ground, chattered all together with surprising volubility and excitement. At first, half-asleep as I was, I could not make out what they wanted; but when I gathered that my friend Waldron was seized with cholera, I was alarmed indeed, and crawled out of the palanquin as speedily as I could, to render him assistance. The bearers were all as frightened and helpless as a flock of sheep with a wolf in their midst, and I could see that they were perfectly panic-stricken. On reaching Waldron's palanquin, which was a hundred yards or so ahead of mine, I found my friend, as I thought, very ill, and, as he faintly assured me, suffering from all the symptoms of cholera. What was to be done? We had no medicine but quinine, and it was vain to look for any. Fortunately, we had brandy, without which an Indian traveller rarely journeys, and of this I made Waldron swallow a considerable quantity neat. Then I ran back to call the bearers to proceed without an instant's delay; but imagine my dismay when I discovered that they had one and all disappeared! I shouted, and called without effect. There was no answer. I ran back upon our road for some distance at my best speed, but could see no one; I shouted again and again, threatened and entreated by turns, but only to the trees of the forest, for not a bearer was to be seen. At last, I was obliged to own to myself that we were deserted, and with no little consternation, returned to my sick friend. He was apparently worse, and could scarcely speak, and yet I could do nothing for him. Suddenly, the thought flashed across my mind that I might return to the village we had left, and, with the aid of the head-man and the bungalow peon, compel another set of bearers to accompany me. I told Waldron of this at once; and my poor friend, who was by this time so nervous and weak as scarcely to be able to understand what I said, silently squeezed my hand; a gesture I accepted as an assent. There was no time to be lost: I wrapped a blanket round him, and set off upon my lonely errand by the flickering light of the moon.

At first, I was too much engrossed by poor Waldron's piteous state to think much of my surroundings; and I had gone over perhaps half the distance that divided us from the last stage we

had left, when I became painfully aware that I was in a very awkward predicament myself. It was that part of the road where the bamboos grew thickly, and I was passing a great cluster of canes whose feathery leaves obscured the light, when I tripped over a stone, and fell flat on the road. I was not much hurt—only my knee bruised; but in getting up again to brush the dirt off my clothes, I happened to look back, and an indescribable sensation of awe came over me at what I saw in my tracks: *There was a tiger following me.* At first, I would not believe it; I reasoned with myself that such a circumstance was impossible. 'I am nervous, tired, anxious, and have, perhaps, an attack of fever coming on,' I said to myself: 'and that dark thing there in the road that I fancy is a tiger crouching, is no tiger at all, but only a shadow or a stone. It's all nonsense. Think of Waldron, and step out.' I did so, encouraging myself as I walked as fast as I could, without actually running, by such reflections as these, although I felt in a cold perspiration, and my knees knocked together, I am not ashamed to say, with pure fright. Remember, I had no rifle, gun, or even a pistol with me, and was quite at the mercy of the tiger, if tiger it was. Perhaps, for one hundred yards or so, I restrained my curiosity to look round again, but at last this overcame my sense of prudence, and I stopped short and faced round. There could be no mistake this time. Not thirty paces from me, standing full in the moonlight, was a large tiger, which crouched to the ground directly I turned. I do not know what another person would have done under the circumstances; for myself, I felt for the moment mad, with mingled rage and terror. To be followed thus was cruel and irritating, and there must be an end to it. This was the predominant thought in my mind, though I was at the same time cold with fear. I cursed the tiger in my heart, as if he was a reasonable being opposing my wishes, and in the wildness of despair, I threw up my arms suddenly, and shouted with all my strength. I knew it was neck or nothing; but my joy was greater than I can express when I saw the tiger rise and slink into the jungle. He did this so silently and smoothly, that I had to look hard at the place where he had been to feel assured he was really gone; but then, overcome by my emotions, I sank down on the ground, where I remained a moment or two, wiping the cold sweat from my brow. Happily, I had my cigar-case and lights in the pocket of my coat; and to reassure myself a little, I drew out a cigar, and, with trembling fingers, succeeded in lighting it. In some circumstances there is nothing like tobacco to steady the nerves. I should like to 'propose,' if it were given me to do so, with a cigar in my mouth; and I should think that a pipe must be a great aid to a person desirous of borrowing money from a friend. With the smoke, my courage revived, and I even had the temerity to throw a good-sized stone into the bush where my enemy had disappeared. 'He is gone for good,' I said to myself, 'and joy go with him,' for there was no response to this insult; and the thought lending me renewed vigour, I stepped out briskly again. 'The beast evidently took me for a deer, or something of that sort, and bolted when he heard the human voice divine.—Hollo! As I live, there he is again.'

The cigar dropped from my mouth as I muttered these last words under my breath; and I

stood transfixed, as it were, gazing at the long, stealthy form of the tiger, as he passed across a glade in the jungle, walking parallel with me. He was much closer than before—not twenty paces distant, I fancy; and the horrible thought came icily upon me, that he was keeping me company until a favourable opportunity offered for a spring. Again I shouted aloud, and again there was no response. I summoned all the courage I could muster, and walked on, keeping as near to the other side of the path as the jungle permitted, and peering cautiously into the bushes as I advanced. Still no tiger. I had got over another hundred yards or so, all my nerves strung to their utmost tension, when again I beheld that same dreadful form gliding across a moonlit glade. This time I saw the animal so plainly, that the marks on his skin were clearly discernible, and though I lost sight of him again in a moment, this sickened me with a frightful apprehension. It was evident the animal was stalking me, and I paused to consider what was to be done. To return was as bad as to stand still, and yet to go on, looked very like tempting fate. Nowhere was there a tree I could climb for safety. The bamboos grew in thick clumps, with so much undergrowth about their stems, as to render it hopeless to try to penetrate it without making much noise in the attempt, and I felt that such noise would be in the highest degree dangerous under the circumstances. I might run at my best pace ahead, and for a second I thought of doing so; but then, again, the tiger could easily outstrip me, and would not running encourage him to follow? There was nothing for it but to walk on as I had been doing; and accordingly, affecting a courage I was far from feeling, I went on my way. I could hear nothing as I walked but the sound of my own footsteps, and the faint rustling of the leaves in the bamboos overhead; but this silence of the night only rendered the occasional glimpses I caught of my terrible enemy the more appalling, as he slunk like a shadow from bush to bush, but always on a line with me, and, as I fancied, nearer and nearer to the road-side. I do not know how long this continued. I was in that state of mind to take no count of time, and my only idea was to get on as fast as possible to the village for assistance. It was just then, and when I was plodding along over the ruts and stones in the path, that I heard, or fancied I heard, the sound of beavers' voices borne faintly towards me on the night-breeze. 'Hay oh! Hi oh! Hay oh! Hi oh!' seemed to be wafted to me from afar like a song of deliverance, and I stopped for a moment to be sure that my ears had not deceived me. At the time, indeed, I was very doubtful whether I was awake or asleep, sane or insane. It might all be a horrible nightmare, and my ghastly companion a mere freak of the imagination. I pinched my arm, to make certain I was not dreaming; but I need not have put my wakefulness to this test, for there was the tiger, and *this time in front of me.* He must have passed ahead while I stopped to listen; and he now lay crouched in the very middle of the path, about twenty paces in front of me. The moon was shining very brightly at the moment—not a cloud near it, and I could distinctly make out every limb of the animal, even to his tail, which was moving from side to side with a rapid whisking motion. Instinctively, I stepped a few paces backwards, fully expecting to see the tiger pounce upon

me in one or two of those great bounds peculiar to the animal; but he did nothing of the sort—he only sneaked a little nearer, his belly upon the ground, and so stealthily, that I only could tell that he had moved by his preserving the same distance from me as before. Not daring to look round, I stepped back again, half-dead with terror, but supported to some extent by the cries of the palanquin bearers in the distance, that were now drawing rather closer to me. It was a palanquin coming along the road from Pooree, and if it came quickly I might be saved. This was the question: would the tiger devour me before it could arrive, or not? I could not think upon it; my brain swam, and I believe for a time I must have been unconscious of anything about me. The last thing I remember was an attempt I made to shout, although, whether I did shout or not, I cannot say, and then I awoke to find myself in the arms of a stranger, who was bending over me, and holding a flask to my lips. There were a crowd of bearers and armed peons standing round, and two palanquins, one of which was Waldron's. In a few words, the stranger explained it all. He was the head-assistant to the collector of a neighbouring district, and was travelling on duty from Pooree, when he came to the place where poor Waldron lay alone on the road. Luckily, he had a medicine-chest with him, and was something of a doctor. He prescribed for my friend on the spot, and ordered a few of his numerous hangers-on to take up the sick man's palanquin, and follow him. They travelled at their best speed, or I might not have lived to tell the tale. The civilian went on to tell me that he was aroused a second time by his peons, who ran ahead, shouting out: 'Bagh, Bagh!' (Tiger, Tiger!) and by the commotion among his bearers, who nearly allowed the palanquin to fall on the ground. He seized his rifle, which lay loaded beside him; but when he jumped out of the palanquin, the tiger was gone, and there remained in its place, to his great astonishment, myself. That a European should be found in a faint on such a road, and in such a place, was an enigma to him, until I told my story, when, seeing how fatigued and excited I was, he insisted upon my getting into his palanquin, while he walked alongside it. My own palanquin, I should say, was being brought slowly after us by two or three of my new friend's numerous retainers.

There is little more to tell. We all three duly arrived at the bungalow, Waldron in a profound sleep, from which he awoke late next morning much better in health. Whether the narcotic he had taken was a cure for cholera, or his attack was a very slight one, I cannot say, but certainly he was as fit to travel that day as I was myself. Perhaps I was the greater invalid of the two, for I was suffering much from fever, brought on, no doubt by the fatigue and excitement of the previous night. However, this cholera-stricken village was no place to stay in, and Waldron and I determined to go on to Pooree at once, and this time by daylight. Thanks to the official importance of our civilian friend, we had no difficulty this time in procuring bearers; and about one o'clock in the day we returned over that terrible road, that must ever leave a vivid impression upon my memory, without further adventure. The civilian was bound in the other direction; but he told me that he would be in that part of the country again in a

few weeks, when he would certainly beat up my friend the tiger. And long afterwards—after we had left Pooree, and were busy with the parades and drills of regimental existence—I had a letter from this same civilian, sending me a tiger-skin, which he vouched for as the coat of the identical beast that went so near eating me up. It was the only tiger that haunted that particular road, he said, and it was killed by a native Shikarree, for the sake of the government reward. A woman's 'bangle' or golden ornament was said to have been found in its stomach, but this may have been the invention of the Shikarree. True or not, the skin was and is a handsome one; but it does not need to be spread as a hearthrug constantly before my eyes, to recall the terrible memories of that night I spent in the jungle.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER XXII.—THE LETTER.

FOR weeks, nothing more was said between wife and husband upon the subject of Richard; but every morning, so soon as time permitted of the arrival of an answer to her letter, Maggie listened with eagerness to the postman's ring, and felt sick at heart when no news came from beyond seas. Besides her desire to justify her husband in the world's eyes, she had a passionate wish that the two brothers should be reconciled, and Richard's silence seemed to portend that this would never be. Of course, he might not be at New York, but in the fact that he was there, lay her only hope. It was almost certain that he would never communicate with home again of his own free-will; and she had confidence in the effect of her appeal to him, should it ever reach his hands. John, on the other hand, evinced no sign of expectation, and appeared to have dismissed the subject from his mind.

At last, one morning, as they sat at breakfast, Mrs Morden put a letter in her hand, with a cheerful: 'From foreign parts, I think, ma'am;' and Maggie saw that it had the New York postmark. Her heart beat violently, but she concealed her agitation, and left the letter on the table till the housekeeper had cleared away the things, a duty which she always performed herself. Then so soon as she had left the room—'John, the letter has come,' said Maggie gravely.

John looked up from the newspaper, in which he was engaged with an air of enforced interest, and answered: 'What letter?'

It seemed extraordinary to her that he should be so indifferent concerning a matter which had filled her own mind for so long, and she cast at him, for the first time in her life, a look of keen reproach. 'Ten thousand pardons, Maggie!' cried he; 'but for the moment I had forgotten.'

'O John, it is not from Richard himself; it is not his handwriting! Somebody else has written, perhaps to say— Oh, I dare not open it!'

'Why, Maggie, it is an official communication, that is all. See! it is stamped, 'From the Dead-letter Office.'

'The Dead-letter Office!' Maggie shuddered, and hid her face in her hands.

'My darling, those words mean nothing, except that the person to whom the inclosure was addressed has not called for it within a certain time.

This is simply your own letter come back again. For my part, I expected nothing else.'

'John, you are deceiving me!' exclaimed Maggie. 'You do it for my sake, but it is cruel. You are affecting a calmness which you do not feel. Your hand is trembling, though your speech is firm. Be candid with me. I can bear to hear the truth. You know something that I don't know about Richard.'

'I? How should I know?'

If he had been really affecting unconcern, her accusation had baffled him, and he had given up the deception altogether. His face had become deadly pale, and his voice, usually so calm and measured, quavered like that of an old man, as he went on complainingly: 'Have you not read the words Richard left behind him? And what can I have heard since those were written?'

'I cannot tell, John, but it seems to me that you are in possession of some fact which, for my sake, as you imagine, you keep from me. I think, too, that my father also knows more about Richard than he chooses to tell.'

'Indeed!' said John more briskly. 'Then you had better tax him with it, for I do assure you his knowledge is not shared by me.'

Maggie remained silent and thoughtful for a full minute, during which her husband kept his eyes upon her, like one who fears a blow.

'Dear John,' said she at last, 'this subject is a painful one to both of us, and I, for my part, do not wish to recur to it. If you can really put the matter at rest which troubles me, do so if it can be done! I ask you, on your honour, has anything come to your knowledge, since Richard's departure, to make you conclude him dead?'

'Dead?' repeated her husband, in a voice so low that it scarcely reached her ears—'dead? How came you to think of that? Hush! Don't talk of it here; let us come out into the garden.'

He stepped through the open window as he spoke, and Maggie followed him with trembling limbs. It seemed to her that she was on the verge of some terrible secret, which his lips would reveal only where none could overhear it. He led her to the extremity of the garden, where a rustic bower with its bench had been newly built. It was in structure very different from the arbour built upon the leads in Mitchell Street, yet, somehow, it reminded her of it, and of that interview with Richard wherein he had won her consent to their marriage. Behind this bower, instead of lines of rail, lay a gravel-pit, long unworked—though some of its contents had been used to make the garden-paths by old Matthew Thurle, and this was surrounded by a little wood, or, as the folk at Hilton called it, a spinney. It was a very lonely and secluded spot indeed.

'Now, tell me, Maggie,' said John, taking her hand in his, but looking on the ground, 'why you think—what you said just now about Richard.'

'I did not say I thought it, John; I asked you for your own opinion.'

'I have none to offer, Maggie. But perhaps I may have one, when you have told me yours. I have not thought of the matter as you have done; let us talk it over now—for the last time.'

The hand that lay in hers was cold as marble, and his face looked more than ever 'like a statue,' as she had heard folk term it.

'I think, Richard is dead, John, for two reasons:

partly from what I know of his character, with which his sudden disappearance, without a word of warning, is wholly inconsistent; but especially from his silence since. He might not have forgiven us—though I hope he would—but he would certainly have written, either in forgiveness or in reproach, when he heard of your marriage.'

'But what if he has never heard?'

'That seems very unlikely. It is impossible he could have been so indifferent to what happened after his departure. No, no; if he lives, he knows!'

'I see,' said John, with quiet gravity, and chocking off, as it seemed, these arguments upon his fingers; 'you think him dead because he has acted inconsistently with your ideas of him. Is that your only reason?'

'It is not. I am convinced, from certain circumstances, that his departure was hurried—not such as it would have been, had he had any long journey in contemplation.'

'What circumstances?'

'Well, they are trifling in themselves; but for one thing, he left his cigar-case'—

'But that was empty,' was John's quick reply; 'at least, added he, "I think Mrs Morden said so."

'Yes, it was empty,' said Maggie thoughtfully. 'He told me once that he never went to bed so long as he had a cigar in his pocket. He must have meant, therefore, to go to bed when he had done his talk with you that night; then changed his mind, and gone into the town.—Do you think it humanly possible, John, that he was made away with?'

'Made away with!' echoed John, in a hoarse whisper. 'Do you mean murdered?'

Maggie moved her head in assent; there was a lump in her throat that would not let her speak.

'No, no, Maggie; he was not—that. I am certain of it. He had many evil friends in Hilton, but not one enemy—except himself.'

'Not Dennis Blake?'

'Nay, this is not right, Maggie. You must not entertain unjust thoughts. The man you speak of is a worthless profligate, but quite incapable of such a crime. I, of all men, have no cause to defend him; but you are doing Blake wrong.'

'I am not so sure, John. There are some suspicious circumstances which have come to my knowledge about that person. Fanny, who has the charge of little Willie, you know, has told me of them. She told my father, who, it seems, bade her hold her tongue—I don't doubt, to spare me.'

'And he was quite right,' observed John earnestly, 'not only on your account, but in the interests of common justice. You despise the malicious rumours current against myself; and yet you give ear to the idle tattle of a servant-girl, which would brand a fellow-creature with the worst of crimes!'

'But perhaps it is not idle tattle. She knows the woman in whose house Blake lodged, and she tells her that some one entered it after two o'clock on the morning of Richard's disappearance; that she heard Blake go down and let that person in.'

'That is like enough,' muttered John thoughtfully.

'And that was the hour at which you parted from Richard, was it not?'

'It was about that time.'

'Well, the woman says, that though she heard this man come in'—

'How do you know it *was* a man?' inquired John quickly.

'She heard his footstep on the stairs, and she says it was Richard's footstep, with which she was familiar, for he often used to come and play cards with her lodger late at night.'

'Well, supposing it *was* Richard? She heard him come and go; what then?'

'She did not hear him go. She might have been asleep, of course, when he went away; but so it was. And when you asked Blake, on that very day, whether Richard had been to his rooms the previous night, he denied it. I remember father saying at the time that he was sure Blake was telling a lie.'

'That may be so or not, Maggie,' answered her husband gravely, and rising from his seat; 'but I can tell you this, that the very last man in all Hilton to do harm to my poor brother would have been Dennis Blake. His death would have been greatly to his disadvantage, for Richard was an annuity to him. You are the wisest and best of womankind, Maggie, but you are still a woman, warped by prejudice, and incapable of an unbiassed judgment. Pray, let me hear of this no more.'

Maggie felt that their talk was over, and the topic of it sealed for ever.

Her husband had shewn, for the first time, what was for him a deep displeasure. She did not respect him less on that account; for had it not been caused by her accusation of his enemy? How good and just he was! How slow to impute evil even to the worst of men, and those who had done him the worst injuries!

Without being satisfied by his arguments, she was convinced, and that is as much as any husband can expect, even the most sanguine.

CHAPTER XXIII.—THE CORPSE-CANDLE.

To dismiss a haunting subject from our thoughts, of regard to the wishes of others, is a difficult, but, to a dutiful mind, not an impossible task. If Maggie had loved her husband more, and respected him less, perhaps she could not have been so obedient; but as it was, she did her best to cease to speculate on Richard's fate, since, whenever she did so, she found her suspicions centring upon the man for whose innocence she had John's own word, which was law to her. There was reason, too, she was obliged to confess, upon John's side in this matter, as well as authority. A year ago, though she had even then good cause to loathe and despise the man, it would never have occurred to her to impute such a heinous crime to Dennis Blake as the murder of his friend. But hearing from time to time, partly from her father, chiefly from talkative Mrs Morden, how low he was falling; first expelled from his club; then passing a vagabond life in bar-rooms and billiard-rooms; eventually an outcast and a sot, and clothed in rags, as she had seen him with her own eyes in the public streets, her views of him had insensibly received their colour from his circumstances. To suppose a man who dresses in the height of fashion, and keeps a riding-horse, guilty of slaying a fellow-creature for the contents of his purse, requires a stretch of imagination, not in the straight line, but at the angle leading to melodrama; whereas, in

rags and want, and surrounded with the lurid halo of evil courses, the same personage may be credited with anything. Moreover, the idea of Richard being dead at all did not seem to be entertained by any one except herself, who, alas, had been so wrong about him, while others had been proved right. So she went about her household duties with greater diligence than ever; pursued the old handiwork that she had suffered to fall into disuse; and especially occupied herself with little Willie less than she had been wont to do. The child was growing strikingly like his father, and whenever she looked upon him, Richard seemed to stand before her, pale and mournful, as though reproaching her, not with her marriage, for her conscience held her clear upon that score, but with the complacency with which his mysterious fate had been accepted, and of which such advantages had been reaped without question. For was not her father cheerful, convalescent, and placed above the reach of want; and was not she herself, if not high placed, far above what she could have hoped to be as Richard's wife, and tended by loving hands, that would not let the very winds of heaven visit her too roughly—and had not all this edifice of prosperity been built, as it were, out of the ruins of lost Richard!

If Maggie had had children of her own, the task she had imposed upon herself would have been easier; 'baby fingers, waxen touches,' would have driven out of her those morbid fancies; the prattle of their infant tongues would have drowned the voice that seemed to appeal to her from the tomb, and even as it was, it was growing less and less importunate, when a circumstance occurred that gave it a significance it had never possessed before.

Maggie was passing to her own room one night in early winter, when at the staircase window she came upon the housekeeper looking intently out of it: not having her trumpet in her ear, the old woman did not perceive her mistress's approach, but continued her scrutiny, at the same time muttering to herself.

'It is gone now, but it was there a minute ago. I'll swear it!' murmured she.

'What is it you are looking at, Mrs Morden? You must have good eyes to pierce through such a night as this.'

The housekeeper turned towards her a face that, in the candle-light, shewed a very different complexion to its ordinary apple-like hue, and answered hastily: 'Oh, nothing, ma'am; I was only just a-going to draw down the blind, which Lucy has forgotten.'

'I see there is nothing now; but what was that you did see? I heard you say you saw something.'

'Well, it might have been a shooting-star, but it seemed to be too near the ground. Lucy saw it too last night, she says, and that's what made me take such notice. But, oh! dear-a-me! them girls will say anything, especially if they have heard people say it before!'

'What is it she has heard people say?' asked Maggie. Her mind misgave her that it was something of which she had better be ignorant; the housekeeper's observation respecting Lucy having at once recalled the gossip of Willie's nurse to her remembrance; but was it not even worse to be the victim of such a morbid apprehension, than to grapple with it at once!

'It is better to let such foolish tales die out of their own selves,' said Mrs Morden, with a didactic air, 'than to encourage them by paying them any attention.'

'Nevertheless, I must ask you to speak out,' answered Maggie firmly. 'Your occupation at this window did not seem much like the discouragement you recommend, I think. Please to come into my room.'

'If you insist upon knowing what I was looking for, why, I must tell you,' replied the old woman reluctantly, as she followed her mistress to her chamber, and closed the door behind her; 'but it's not a pleasant thing to repeat, and will be painful to you to hear, especially since you have been apt to cut me short whenever I have spoken of the matter before; I mean, of poor Mr Richard's going away, and what has been said about it.'

'What has Richard's going away to do with your looking out of that window?'

'Well, nothing at all, so far as I know. It's not my story, mistress, I assure you! but our Lucy, she picks up all the rubbish that is going about, and this is some of it.'

If Mrs Morden thought to weary her mistress out by her prolixity, as she often did her master, and thereby gain her ends, which were in this instance to avoid the required explanation, she was deceived. Maggie had seated herself by the bedroom fire—one of the many luxuries with which her husband's solicitude had provided her, but which would otherwise have never occurred to her to desire—and was listening with every mark of attention, though with averted face.

'You see, it's got about of late—though I am sure I don't know why, ma'am, unless it's because one has been so long without a scrap of news—that poor Mr Richard is dead; and more than that, that he's been made away with.'

Maggie was prepared for something which should demand some exercise of self-control, or else she would surely have betrayed the shock which this announcement cost her, chiming in as it did with her own convictions, and corroborating the suspicions she would have fain dispelled. She kept her eyes, however, fixed upon the glowing embers, and maintained a resolute silence.

'Their notion is, ma'am,' resumed the old woman, who, now that the ice seemed broken, and without any catastrophe, began to feel her usual gusto in narration, 'that he was robbed and murdered, and then hidden away somewhere underground. But murder will always out, and when man cannot discover it, Heaven takes the matter into its own hand. A flame, for example, is said to flicker over the place where the body is hidden; and that's true, for I've read it in a book. Only, of course, it's very wrong and foolish to suppose anything of the sort with respect to poor Master Richard, who may come back any day, alive and well, just as likely as not; and, as to his being murdered, what I say is, Who could have hurt a hair of his head? Why, not a man in all Hilton, unless, to be sure, it were that there Dennis Blake.'

'Dennis Blake! What makes you think so ill of him?'

'Well, he's a bad lot, Miss Maggie—the housekeeper often called her young mistress, in moments of confidence, by her maiden name. 'He was the very worst of all those folks that poor Master

Richard brought to this house; he was not so clever as some, but he was the wickedest. Servants see things sometimes as gentlefolks and guests never suspect. I've gone into the parlour to put the supper out, when none of them have noticed me, being so intent upon their game, and I've seen Mr Blake play tricks, I'm sure of it, with the big cards. Now, a man as would cheat his friend, would, in my opinion, murder him; that is, if he got the chance, and could feel himself pretty safe when he did it.'

'Is it commonly reported, then, that Dennis Blake committed this crime?'

'Well, no, ma'am; I can't say that: some say it's one man, and some say it's another. What I says is, if it's *anybody*, it's that man Blake. It's nobody nearer home, I'll take my oath on't.'

'Nobody nearer home!' exclaimed Maggie, with unfeigned astonishment. 'Why, who *should* it be?'

Her surprise alarmed the old woman more than her indignation would have done: she did not venture to pursue her own suggestion, but hastened, with nervous trepidation, to efface its effect. 'I said, that wherever the body might be, there was no body near our house—such as in the woodhouse. That is where the light has been seen, once or twice, they say, late o' nights, and at which you saw me looking from the staircase window. There really was a light, though it shone but for an instant; though, as for its being a corpse-candle, as Mrs—— Oh! ma'am, you are never going to tell Master John?'

'I am going to tell him there's a light in the woodhouse; why not?' replied Maggie vehemently, but pausing with her hand upon the door. She had realised at last the horrible accusation against her husband. She must do something; she could not sit quiet in that room until he came, and then be silent. 'If there are thieves in the garden, am I not to tell?' Without waiting to hear further remonstrance, she ran down-stairs to the parlour, which she had just quitted. She had left her husband reading near the table, but he was now standing with his elbow on the mantel-piece, looking very grave and sad.

'What is it, Maggie? I thought you had gone to bed.'

'Yes; but there is some one in the garden: a light has been seen in the toolhouse but five minutes ago.'

'Indeed! I will go and see.'

She would have given much, could all those revilers, who invented these foul lies about John Milbank, have beheld him now, as he calmly took his hat down from its peg in the little lobby, and walked forth unarmoured into the night. Did that resolute face betray a guilty conscience, or that firm step betoken the courage of despair? He looked back once, with an assuring smile, as she stood, candle in hand, to watch him out of doors, and then was gone.

He was some time away, perhaps five minutes, which seemed thrice five to her, but presently returned with the same quiet face.

'There is no one in the toolhouse, Maggie, nor has there been, as far as I could see. It must have been your fancy.'

'It was not mine at all; it was Mrs Morden who saw the light, or thought she saw it,' answered Maggie with indignation. She was not so angry with the housekeeper as with herself, for having

been vexed with her vulgar terrors, and for having listened, even involuntarily, to that hateful story, born of malice and superstition, respecting the corpse-candle. Nevertheless, her heart quaked within her when her husband summoned the old woman, lest she should blurt out her disbelief in it (as she had done to herself), under the impression that she (Maggie) had told it to her master. But all John had to ask was when the light in the tool-house had been seen, and how often; to which Mrs Morden's answers were, for once, direct and short enough. It had been seen but thrice, and always about the same hour, between eleven and midnight; on the other hand, the situation of the spot was such as respected the house that it could only be seen from the kitchen and staircase windows.

It was evident John Milbank attached but little importance to the affair; and with the remark that he would have the tools brought within doors on the morrow, after which there would be nothing in the outhouse to be stolen save the stack of fuel for winter use, he seemed to dismiss the subject from his mind. Not so poor Maggie; the peace that she had fondly hoped was growing within her was by this paltry incident nipped as with sudden frost; or rather rank Calumny had grown so high as quite to stifle it; her thoughts returned to that forbidden channel of Richard's fate with redoubled force.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A VERY important physiological fact has been demonstrated by Professor Ferrier, of King's College, London, and in a paper read at a meeting of the Royal Society, he has described the experiments by which his demonstration was established—'that there is a localisation of function in special regions of the brain.' A former experimentalist had shewn that certain forms of epilepsy were occasioned by irritation or 'discharging lesions' of the substance known to anatomists as the 'gray matter' in a certain part of the brain, and Dr Ferrier not only confirms that theory, but has carried his investigation into a wider range of phenomena.

The animals experimented on included jackals, dogs, cats, monkeys, birds, and frogs, toads, and fishes. They were rendered partially insensible by means of an anæsthetic, the surface of the brain was then laid bare, and certain parts were touched, or irritated, by the conductor of a current of electricity; and in some instances a portion of the brain was cut away. Generally speaking, it was found that movements of the limbs are excited when certain parts of the side of the brain are touched; and it is remarkable in some instances, that on touching a second place, not more than an eighth of an inch from the first, an entirely different movement is produced. One touch, for example, may move the hind-leg; the other excites a muscle far away from the hind-leg; and these results are so invariable, that Dr Ferrier can tell beforehand what will be the effect of irritating any given spot. And that which is true of one animal, appears to be true of all the animals experimented on.

From this we learn that the brain can be mapped out in certain definite areas, to each of which a different function could be assigned. Thus it is ascertained that the muscles of the face are excited

by irritation of the forepart of the brain, movements of the head and eyes are also produced, and the phenomena are so marked, that Dr Ferrier is led to believe the convolution known as the 'angular gyrus' to be 'the cerebral expansion of the optic nerve, and therefore the seat of visual perception.' In like manner he regards a neighbouring convolution, irritation of which excites movements of the ear, 'as the cerebral termination of the auditory nerve.' He also localises the sense of smell, and can indicate generally the locality 'connected with sensations of taste and touch.'

Such, briefly sketched, are the leading points in Dr Ferrier's paper. Of course the great question remains—In what way does irritation of the surface of the brain produce the effects described? To answer this question satisfactorily, will require a long course of research and observation. Meanwhile, we may content ourselves with the suggestion, 'that a scientific phrenology is possible.' Not the fallacious phrenology of a former generation; but a science based on anatomical investigation.

Readers who desire further information on this interesting subject will find it in the *Proceedings* of the Royal Society.

We have more than once mentioned the good work done by the Scottish Meteorological Society in their special vocation, and we gather from their last Report that the good work still goes on. They have appointed a Committee to discover, if possible, on what (and whether any) meteorological influences a good or bad herring-fishery may depend. Some fishermen think that a bad season means a cold season; others, that storms, and not temperature, keep away the herrings from their accustomed haunts. The question is an interesting one; and if intelligent fishermen can be got to co-operate in the needful observations, it may perhaps be solved. Another question which the Society are investigating is, How far does the sea-climate extend inland? They have two stations—a small island in the Shetlands, and a small island in the Hebrides—where land influence goes for nothing, and where, consequently, the sea-temperature prevails; and these furnish data for determining the influence of land in lowering the winter, and raising the summer temperature. The Society have also had under notice a suggestion, 'that trap-dykes, by acting as good continuous conductors between the fused material in the centre of the earth and the outer air, might be expected to exercise considerably greater thermal influence than surrounding districts of stratified rocks, such as the coal formations.' This is a suggestion which may have important bearings on agriculture.

A rumour from Russia to the effect that the mammoth is not an extinct animal, has set naturalists on the alert; and should it prove true that living mammoths are now to be seen in the deep gorges of the Lena, in far Eastern Siberia, we may anticipate that expeditions will be sent out to capture a few of the huge animals for the zoological gardens of Europe. According to the rumour, the discovery was made by one of the convicts who had been transported to that distant region. That the mammoth once abounded in Siberia, is well known; for thousands of mammoths, whose tusks supply much of the ivory used in the arts, are there imbedded in the frozen ground.

It is well known to naturalists that the ancient

animals of Australia had peculiarities of structure, and that the peculiarities have prevailed down to the present day. Professor Owen's papers on the fossil mammals of Australia, published in the *Philosophical Transactions*, afford interesting evidence of the structure and habits of gigantic birds, kangaroos, and other creatures that lived in the early ages of the globe; and of this evidence in a fossil form the supply appears to be inexhaustible. An interesting example occurs in a report of an exploration in Queensland, published by the Royal Geographical Society. The exploring party had arrived on the banks of the river Walsh, and found in the cliffs, and among the boulders, fossils innumerable, including a few bones of the vertebrae of some large animal. 'There they lie,' writes Mr Hann, the leader of the expedition, 'under the traveller's feet like pebbles on the seashore; they hang above his head ready to crush him if he be not careful; he cannot move without seeing them around him on all sides, of all sizes, and numbers among them beautifully perfect.' What a spot for a collector! Shall we hear of 'a rush' to the fossil deposits on the Walsh? They might pay better even than auriferous quartz.

It has been a question whether any and what animals live in the lakes of the great alkali plains around Salt Lake City. From one of those pools a bottle of water containing swarms of animals resembling crustaceans was taken and brought to England, when, on examination, one specimen only was found surviving. It was a Cyclops somewhat like the common species.

Carbolic acid is found to be a better preservative of specimens intended for microscopic examination than creosote; but in preserving algae, it stands pre-eminent. Creosote, in process of time, deposits a crust which injures or obscures the object, while the acid solution remains always clear.

The air-brake invented by Mr Westinghouse, which we have before noticed, has been officially tested on the railway between Newcastle and Berwick, with complete success. The train running 50 miles an hour was stopped in 20 seconds within a distance of 260 yards; and in another instance, going down an incline of 1 in 190 at a speed of 45 miles, the stoppage was effected in 15 seconds, and in a distance of 210 yards. We may therefore believe that on all lines, but especially on those of frequent and complicated traffic, this new brake may be so applied as to prevent many a collision. The mode of working is simple. The guard turns a tap, and instantaneously the pressure of an air-cushion bears on the wheel-blocks, and the train is brought to a stand-still without the heavy grinding and concussion produced by a non-elastic brake. Any means of safety should be welcomed in a country where punctuality is not considered an imperative duty, and where railway accidents are described as unavoidable.

The famine in India imparts interest to an inquiry concerning the fresh-water fisheries of that country, which was commenced in 1867, by order of the Indian government. The rivers are numerous, and various in character, from mountain torrents and lazy shallows, to broad rolling streams in the hot sun-searched plains, and the fishes of one locality are rarely if ever met with in the other. The waste of fish, through greedy and indiscriminate capture, is enormous, and the principal object

of the inquiry was to prevent this waste, and thus multiply means of sustenance in a country where deficiency of animal food prevails. Reports from native and European functionaries in all parts of India and in Burmah have been obtained, and these are embodied in a book of more than four hundred pages, by Surgeon-major Day, published at the government printing-office, Calcutta. The interference of law in behalf of fish has been so beneficial in this country, that we can but wish success to any similar proceeding in India, where, when rice fails, the people die of famine; just as the Irish a few years ago died through trusting in potatoes. Mr Day's Report embraces the whole question, including a descriptive catalogue of the fish, with some mention of their habits. Among the latter, we find a curious instance. In a mountain torrent, fish are comparatively helpless; hence many of the species which inhabit the hill-streams are provided with an adhesive sucker behind the lower jaw or on the chest, and with this they hold on to the rocks, and thus save themselves from being washed away.

The water-supply of Calcutta is derived from the river Hooghly (or Hugli, as it is now spelt), and during the rainy season the water looks muddy when delivered in the houses. While the question of a remedy was under discussion, it was suggested that, by reason of the rains, the proportion of natural saline constituents was largely diminished, and that if the salts could be added artificially, the water would be as bright during the rainy season as at other times. The experiment was tried with carbonate of lime, carbonate of magnesia, and with sulphate of lime, and was in each case successful. The effect of these salts is officially described as to 'cause the very fine particles of clay to coalesce and aggregate into larger and denser ones, which, in the course of twenty-four to forty-eight hours, settle well, and the water can then be filtered easily. The clay has been said to be coagulated, and the term seems appropriate.' This is a fact worth consideration by all concerned in water-supply, especially when the source is a mountain stream. Marseilles, for example, is supplied from the Garonne, a river liable to muddy floods.

It may interest some readers to learn that a hot blast is now used in dentistry as well as in the manufacture of iron. There are some operations in which nothing will dry a cavity or the gum so effectually as a hot blast, and this is blown in by means of a syringe.

LOVE.

The love that will soonest decay,
The love that is surest to die,
The love that will soon fly away,
Is the love
That is told by a sigh.

The love that is surest to last,
The love that a woman's heart needs,
The love that will ever be fast,
Is the love
That is spoken in deeds.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH. Also sold by all Booksellers.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 540.

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

DENNY'S INTENTIONS.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

SILVERBRIDGE is built on the slope of a hill, and its High Street is as steep as the side of a house. Looking down from the crest of the hill, you see a row of quaint old-fashioned houses on either hand; a gilt clock jutting out from the front of an ancient timber building, like the sign of an inn, its supports adorned with fancy scroll-work of iron, quaintly twisted and gilt. At the bottom of the street is the bridge, and a hill rises sharply up from the bridge, a broad 'down,' whose lower slope is covered with houses, but which crowns the houses with corn-fields, turnip-fields, and copses. Below the town, the river winds through an alluvial valley; and above are meadows and park-land, osier-beds and pastures, dotted with clumps of trees, tall elms, and home-loving poplars; but the town itself lies just in the gorge of the river, up one hill and down the other, with a few streets branching out laterally. There is a church at the top of the town, of warm red brick, ugly and comfortable; there is a church in the middle of the town, ancient and chill, with columns of chalk, and narrow Norman arches, and a choir like a crypt, vaulted, and groined, and banded with stone; there is a church at the bottom of the town, almost in the river's bed, brown, and squat, and ugly too, but with a certain air of fitness about it; and then, on the northern slope of the hill, above the river, is a great square Norman keep; and under the keep, astride of the stream, which flows through its inward parts, is the King's Mill, a large brick building, with flour oozing out of all its pores. Beyond the mill and the castle, where the river takes a sweep, turned by the invincible flank of the down, are chalk pits and caverns, with warm red brick cottages resting under the shade; and a road at the foot, that winds its way beneath an avenue of elms, with glimpses of the river, and the fat meadows and hills beyond, blue and ethereal.

Half-way up the High Street of Silverbridge, stands a house of red brick, with many twinkling

windows. A double set of stone steps, protected by an iron railing, gives access to the front-door, on which a large brass plate bears the legend—'Mrs Coltfoot's Preparatory School.'

It is a bright sunny summer's day, and the chimes are celebrating the half-hour after noon in drowsy tinkling cadence; the door with Mrs Coltfoot's brass plate upon it swings open, and a boy in a suit of gray knickerbockers descends the flight of steps. He is about ten years old, and has a merry healthy face, rather smeared with ink, and somewhat overcast at present, as he has been kept in, and expects a lecture from his father when he gets home. With the idea of putting off the evil hour as long as possible, although with an uneasy consciousness that he is only intensifying its misery, he loiters on his way down the High Street, looking at all the shop-windows as he passes, and lingering a long while at the confectioner's, admiring the frosted cake, and the buns, yellow with saffron, and coated thick with sugar and spice. When he reaches the corner of the street, the cross street that runs under the castle and the quarries, he stops again to watch a carriage that is coming along the road. It was a somewhat peculiar vehicle, the like of which has not been built for many a long year. I fancy that in days gone by it would have been called a pony-chair, and was upon little wheels, the pair behind about as big round as Cheshire cheeses, another in front more like good-sized easters; a shaggy little pony was in the curved shafts, who was coming along at a pace something betwixt a walk and a shamble. The occupant of this carriage was an elderly man, with a thin hatchet face, keen small eyes, and with a little gray hair straggling about his cheeks. He wore a white beaver-hat, many sizes too large for him; a blue scarf wound several times round his neck, from which appeared two small points, that represented a latent collar; a faded brown overcoat shewed beneath an old-fashioned blue coat, adorned with brass buttons. He was incessantly twitching the reins; each twitch the pony acknowledged with his ears. Every now and then, he half rose from his seat, and lashed out at the

pony with a little whip. At the lash, the pony swished his tail, but did not quicken his pace. Perhaps, however, but for these constant stimulants, he would have come to a stand-still altogether.

Charlie Blake, the youthful hero of this story, stood with his mouth wide open, watching this curious equipage. He knew very well who the man was, and had often seen his turn-out; but it was a source of perpetual amusement and wonder to him. Old Denny, the man was called; and his pony's name was Bob; and the little fat spaniel, that was panting along half a mile behind, was Carlo; and they lived at the Manor farm; and Denny was said to be enormously rich—worth millions, according to the traditions of the boys.

Denny's keen eyes, searching everything he came across, espied the boy, standing, with eyes and mouth wide open, at the kerb by the corner.

'Hi, boy!' he cried, drawing up his little carriage to the side; when he ceased to twitch and lash, the pony came to a stand. 'Hi, boy! come here.'

Master Charlie was a little alarmed. Perhaps his conscience, pricked him as to raids on old Denny's apples, or as to stones thrown at his pigs, and he dreaded some instant retribution. Anyhow, he looked rapidly around him, as if meditating flight, but he was fascinated by the old gentleman's eye, and felt himself glued to the pavement.

'Come here, boy!' cried Denny once more; and Charlie felt constrained to obey. 'How old are you, boy?'

'Ten; at least I am eleven next birthday.'

'Well, never mind. Have you had the measles?'

'Yes; me and Polly had them together last term.'

'Been vaccinated, hey?'

'Of course, I have!' said Charlie.

'What's your name, boy?'

'Charlie Nostrop Blake.'

'Hum! A long name for a little chap. Where does your father live?'

'Oh, just over there,' said Charlie, pointing vaguely over the houses.

'Would you like a halfpenny, my boy?'

'Mother wouldn't like me to take it.'

'Hum! Good boy! Honour your father and your mother, eh? Gad, I think you'll do. Look here.' Denny pulled out a bright silver shilling, and held it up before the boy. 'Would you like a bright new shilling, eh?'

Charlie's eyes glistened; he wasn't proof against that. 'Yes, I should,' he said.

'Ha! Go and knock at that door, and say that Mr Denny is waiting to see Mr Hutton.'

Charlie did as he was bid. It was a big door, with a big knocker, and it had a brass plate, on which was engraved, 'Hutton and Horton, Solicitors.' Charlie was astonished, when, in answer to his knock, the door started open a few inches, but nobody came.

'Push the door open, and go in,' cried Denny, from his chair.

Charlie felt that he was committing himself to some perilous adventure, and regretted that he hadn't taken to his heels, as his first impulse bade him. Nevertheless, he pushed open the door bravely, and found himself in a matted hall. A hat-stand faced him, and a flight of broad carpeted stairs, on each hand of him a door. Nobody came to him, and he didn't know what to do next. Then the door on his right opened, and a pretty little girl in a white frock, with a great blue sash, came out into the hall. She pulled to the door, and then stood with her back to it, looking with great brown eyes at the stranger.

Charlie was already susceptible to female charms, and desperately ashamed of his weakness. But the little girl in white was such a vision of delight, that he didn't know what to say or do; he stood staring at her in blank admiration. Her long hair floated about her like a golden veil; she had the most charming white stockings, and perfectly ravishing blue shoes.

'What do you want, little boy?' she said with calm superiority; being about half the age of Charlie.

'Mr Denny wants to see Mr Hutton.'

'Ah! some of the office people,' said the child with an air of dignity. 'Over there. Stay; I will shew you.'

The little fairy tripped across the hall, and opened the door: 'Marrables, here is somebody wants papa.'

'Oh, indeed, Miss Fanny,' said a young man who was sitting on a tall stool at a high desk.—'Ha! is it you, young gentleman? Do you want to see Mr Hutton? Perhaps you'll give me your card.'

'I don't want to see him,' replied Charlie colouring. 'It's Mr Denny.'

'Oh, ah!' said the clerk, going to the window, and peering over the wire-blind. 'Yes, there's old Denny. Ah! I'll mention it to the governor.' So saying; he knocked at the door of an inner office, and went in.

'Are you his little boy?' said Fanny, who had run to the window, pointing at the little pony-chair outside.

'No; I should think not,' said Charlie scornfully. 'An old fright like that!'

'Well, you might be, you know,' said Fanny. 'Perhaps he's somebody's papa.'

'I shouldn't think so,' replied Charlie.

'Hollo! mite, what are you doing here?' said a voice from the inner office, and Mr Hutton, a tall florid man of middle age, came forth.—'And who are you, my boy? Ah! young Blake, I see. And Denny, where is he? Outside, eh? Well, I suppose I must go to him.'

Charlie thought now he'd better start off home; only, somehow, he didn't like to go out whilst old Denny was talking there to Mr Hutton; he hadn't got his shilling either; Mr Denny had forgotten it,

no doubt, and he couldn't very well ask for it when he was busy. He had a sort of vague hope, too, of further adventures.

'I know you now,' said Fanny; 'you go to school with Tommy—he's my brother—and you live in the Shipton Road. I know your papa too; such a big man! But he's very poor, isn't he?'

'No; he isn't,' said Charlie stoutly. 'He's got ever so much money.'

'Papa says he's poor. But it doesn't matter; I shall have plenty of money, and I will give you some.'

Charlie said he meant to make his own fortune, and didn't want any of her money. And then he heard the voice of Denny calling: 'Hi, hi! boy; here.'

Charlie ran out, thinking that the shilling was coming now; but Mr Denny had apparently put that back into his pocket.

'He'll do, I think, Hutton, eh? Eleven years old—healthy, good constitution, honours his father and mother, vaccinated, and been through the measles. Yes, I think he'll do capital.'

'Certainly,' said Hutton, looking down at Charlie in an absorbed, thoughtful way. 'He'll do very well. Let's see; what's your Christian name, Blake?'

'Charles Nostrop Blake.'

Denny pulled out a note-book, and put it down. 'Ago, next birthday, eleven, eh? Been vaccinated, had the measles, got his second teeth, good constitution, honours his father and mother.—Yes; he'll do very well, Hutton. Make it so, will you?'

Hutton nodded. 'That'll do, my boy,' he said.

Charlie looked doubtfully up and down. 'There's the shilling?' he said at last.

'What shilling?' cried Denny. 'Have I dropped one, eh? Hutton, have I dropped a shilling?'

'It's the shilling you said you'd give me.'

'Did I say I'd give you a shilling? Come, come, my boy; remember Ananias and Sapphira.—Hutton, he won't do, after all, if he tells fibs.'

'The boy must have thought you said so.—Here, Blake,' said Hutton, good-naturedly, putting his hand into his pocket, 'we'll see if we can't find you a shilling.'

'I won't have it now,' said Charlie independently. 'And as for fibs—I know who tells the most.' Saying which, he took to his heels, and didn't look back till he had got right over the bridge.

When he reached home, he found that he had kept dinner waiting, and that his father was very cross. After the atmosphere had cleared a little, he told his adventure, leaving out the part about the shilling, for, as he hadn't got it, he didn't feel inclined to be rebuked for not refusing it. Mrs Blake was pleasantly excited about the matter. 'O Dick!' she said to her husband, 'perhaps he means to make Charlie his heir! and people say he's worth no end of money!'

Polly clapped her hands; she was a couple of years younger than Charlie. 'How jolly that will be! Fancy Charlie with a fortune! You'll give me some—won't you?'

Charlie flushed to the temples: a hazy golden

vision, a mixture of fortunes and Fanny Huttons floated before his eyes; he felt for the moment quite a superior being. He would have no cold Hutton then, and fat should be a thing unknown.

Polly's keen eyes detected Charlie's momentary inflation; she called him Fortunatus ever after, and chaffed him unmercifully about his expectations.

Denny took a good deal of notice of Charlie after that, and often asked him to the Manor farm, never giving him better entertainment than a stale gingerbread nut, and a glass of sour beer, but putting him through his facings as to what he learned at school, with great assiduity. Charlie would have shirked these visits, but for the canal which ran through the farm, and was full of all kinds of fish—Jack-like young sharks, brilliant perch and bream as big as the kitchen bellows; and there he'd fish all day long whenever he got a holiday, and, lying under the shade of a tree by the canal bank, would watch his float, and dream of being a rich man and old Denny's heir.

The Manor farm didn't exactly belong to Mr Denny; but it was as good as his, everybody said. It belonged to the cathedral of Bincaster, or to the bishop, rather, and Denny held it under a lease—a bishop's lease, as they called it about there—paying twenty-five pounds a year as rent. Holdings under these bishops' leases were always reckoned as good as freehold. It was one of the best farms in the county, this of Denny's, consisting of five hundred acres and more of excellent land; although a couple of hundred years ago it had been a range of barren sand-fields, producing nothing but a few firs and birch trees, and abounding only in rabbits. It had been let at a shilling an acre then, and was let at the same rate now, although the land might well be said to be worth forty shillings or more, in these days.

Denny drove Charlie over to Bincaster one day when he went to pay his rent, and they dined with a dignified old gentleman in a white cravat, who had something to do with the dean and chapter. He had a very fine garden, not by his house, which was in the cathedral precincts, but beyond the city walls—a garden kept in the extremity of neatness and good order. There was a summer-house there too, that was furnished as comfortably as a sitting-room; and here the two old gentlemen sipped their wine, whilst Charlie ran about the garden, strictly enjoined not to touch anything. It was a drowsy place, full of sunshine; the hum of insects, the clang of the old cathedral bells mellowed by distance, the sleepy sounds of the country, twittering of song-birds, cawing of rooks, a dog barking afar off, made a sort of soothing melody that overcame Charlie's senses with sleep. And yet he was conscious of what was going on about him, and heard everything that passed. He knew that the two old men had come out of the summer-house, and that they were standing looking at him as he lay asleep on the grass.

'You've made a very good selection,' said the bishop's man.

'Yes, I think I have. Good sound constitution there, eh? Just right age and everything.'

'You are quite right to be careful; we never know what changes may happen; there'll be a wonderful upset of everything when the old bishop goes. In these days of ecclesiastical commissions and spoliation of the capitular endowments, one

never knows what may happen. Take care of young Charlie here.' And then they passed on.

Charlie never could make out in what way he was connected with the interests of the cathedral people at Bincaster, but it was evident that old Denny had made him his heir, and he was a good deal puffed up at the thought, although he tried to think nothing more about it.

But when Blake was a year or two older, he was sent to a grammar-school a long way off, and getting among a rough set of boys, and into a new way of life, he lost sight of his old dreams and fancies for a while, and thought little more of Denny and his intentions. When Charlie was about sixteen, his father took him from school, and put him into a merchant's office; and a year or two after that he died; and his wife didn't long survive him; so that Charlie Blake and his sister Polly were left to shift for themselves. Richard Blake had been an artist, and had lived pretty much from hand to mouth; but he had insured his life handsomely, and when all debts were paid and affairs wound up, there was about fifty pounds a year left for the brother and sister.

Everybody thought that, under these circumstances, old Denny would have come forward and proposed to do something for Charlie; but he made no sign. He was anxious to know all their future plans, and bade Charlie earnestly to be sure and tell him of all his movements. He didn't offer them any assistance, however, and Charlie was too proud to ask for any.

Charlie made no great hit in business. He had inherited a good deal of his father's artist nature, and perhaps it would have been better for him if he had been permitted to follow the bent of his inclinations; but Richard Blake had tasted too much of the bitterness of such a career to wish his son to pursue it. Still, the best possible intentions and resolutions are unavailing to overcome the bent of natural capacities. Then the dim expectations that floated in his mind, of future wealth, of indefinite possibilities and chances, interfered with any vigorous efforts on the part of Charlie to better his present position. Altogether, the few people who took any interest in his affairs shook their heads over him, and said he hadn't turned out well. Fifteen years after the first introduction of Charlie Blake to old Denny of the Manor farm, the former was living at Liverpool in lodgings with his sister Mary. She was a daily governess in the families of several well-to-do merchants, whilst Charlie had nothing to do at all. He had grown sick and tired of writing advertisements that never received any answer, of writing answers to advertisements that nobody ever took notice of. The occasional response that raised his hopes sometimes, always turned out to be given by 'a party' who wanted money in some way as a deposit, a premium, or an advance. Then there were constant calls to be made at merchants' counting-houses, kicking his heels for hours, waiting the convenience of some self-important principal, to be dismissed with a shake of the head and a wave of the hand: 'Come again in three months, if you like.'

'Polly,' said Charlie, flinging himself on the sofa, after an unsuccessful expedition of this nature, 'I can not stand this any longer. I shall enlist, if I'm not too old; or, I'll join the police, if they'll have me. Oh, why didn't father make me a blacksmith, or give me a craft I could always turn

my hand to! To go about cringing hat in hand, asking leave to earn my bread! I can't stand it, Polly, any longer.'

'It is vexing,' said Polly, who had grown up into a very nice-looking young woman, with a full placid face, broad forehead, and brown hair in smooth bands above it—'it is vexing; but you must have patience. We have enough to live upon, you and I, and it's a great comfort to be together.'

'Do you think, Polly, that I can stay here any longer, to live upon your scanty earnings? You could be very comfortable but for me, lay by money, and by-and-by you'd get married.'

'That isn't at all probable, Charlie,' said Mary, colouring a little; 'I'm not likely to meet anybody here who would suit me, or whom I should suit.'

'Who said anything about here! Polly, when did you hear from Fanny Hutton?'

'Well, I had a letter this morning.'

'And did she say anything about Tom?'

'Nothing particular. He's gone into partnership with his father, that's all.'

'I wonder whether you'd be so keen about corresponding with Fanny, if she hadn't got a Brother Tom!'

'Charlie, I assure you that there is nothing whatever between us; you shouldn't put such things into one's head. You might as well say that Fanny writes to me because I've got a Brother Charlie.'

'Oh, Polly, if I thought so! But what would be the use of it. No; I can't do anything to keep myself, or anybody else: I'll go and list for a soldier.' Charlie jumped up, and looked for his hat, as if with the intention of immediately carrying out his resolution.

'Don't do that, Charlie—please, don't, for my sake; don't, Charlie! Sit down, and talk reasonably, for I have got something to tell you; I have heard of something for you.'

Charlie threw himself on the sofa again. 'Well, let's hear it!' he cried. 'It's all bosh, I daresay.'

'You know Mr Markham, whose daughter I teach, is an African merchant.'

'Well, go on.'

'I have spoken to Mrs Markham often about you. She is such a nice kind woman, and she takes quite an interest in you.'

Charlie groaned. 'Well, go on.'

'I wouldn't tell you before, Charlie, because I didn't want you to leave me; but, after all, it is better that you should risk something than go on in this way. Mr Markham has ships which go to the coast of Africa—the west coast, you know; Sierra Leone, and so on.'

'The white man's grave. I know.'

'Well, it appears that they want a clerk or something out there, at a salary of a hundred and fifty pounds a year. They have lost six within the last few years, but then Mrs Markham says she thinks they drank, and were dissipated.'

'And you would be willing for me to go, Polly?'

'I shouldn't like it, Charlie; but—'

He turned his face to the sofa cushion, and thought bitterly for a few minutes. Polly wouldn't have him go for a soldier, because it would wound her pride to have a brother a private soldier; conning to see her, perhaps, in his staring scarlet uniform, as if she were a servant-maid; but she

didn't mind his risking almost certain death in a quasi-genteel occupation.

'I'll go, Polly,' he said at last, 'if they'll have me; I'll go like a bird. As you say, anything is better than this.'

SOME IDEAS ABOUT THE MOON.

WHILE the sun has for years engaged the close scrutiny of astronomers in England and elsewhere, the moon has not been neglected. If anything, it has been the subject of more rigorous investigation, because it is so much nearer at hand, and altogether more manageable as an object of scientific inquiry. It would be easy to give the legendary history of the moon—how it was an object of interest to Jews, Chaldeans, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans; how it was incorporated with sundry superstitions; how its changing aspects regulated the division of the year into months; and how, in every age, it has been a favourite theme for poetical enthusiasts. About all that, we need say nothing. Old notions about the moon we leave alone, preferring to sum up as clearly as possible the new ideas regarding it. We lately made some reference to Mr Lockyer's large and elegant work on the Sun. Since then has appeared an equally beautiful and highly illustrated volume, *The Moon, considered as a Planet, a World, and a Satellite*, by James Nasmyth, and James Carpenter. Looking at the very beautiful photographs and heliotype of lunar objects, contained in the work, one might say that ordinary inquirers are for the first time presented with pictures of the moon's surface so minute and intelligible as to give a clear idea of what our satellite is really like. Though poets, perhaps, may not like it, the veil of mystery is torn from the moon. It is at length disclosed to us to be a great barren waste of rugged mountains and extinct volcanoes, the whole devoid of air, water, vegetation, or animal life—a rocky solitude going without intermission drearily round the earth—for the earth's, not for its own advantage.

The mean distance at which the moon makes these circuits is, as formerly mentioned, 237,000 miles. Observed by powerful telescopes, its apparent distance is brought within two to three hundred miles, which distance affords a good outline of objects, but nothing can be distinguished smaller than what will measure a hundred and fifty yards across. Among astronomers, there are hopes that, by enlarged telescopic powers, we may bring the moon as clearly before us as we can see Mont Blanc from Geneva with the naked eye. As every one knows, the moon is visible by means of the light which is thrown upon it by the sun. Moonlight may, therefore, be called sunlight, at second-hand. The moon, however, may sometimes be seen by the sun's light being reflected upon it from the earth. This earth-light on the moon is seen in particular conditions of the atmosphere, within a day or two after new moon. At such a time, the old moon, as people are pleased to call it, is said to lie in the new moon's arms—an evil omen, as was once supposed; the

light shining dimly on the body lying within the bright crescent, being nothing else than earth-shine, and no omen either good or bad.

By receiving and reflecting the sun's rays, the moon is obviously an opaque sphere, which by best computation is 2160 miles in diameter, or about a fourth of that of the earth. Rotating on its axis, it revolves round the earth in the same measure of time, that is, twenty-seven days and a quarter. In other words, its rotatory motion is twenty-seven and a half times slower than that of the earth. In consequence of the rotatory motion on its axis, and its revolution round the earth, coinciding, the moon always presents the same side to us. The sun, however, lights it up on both sides. At times, we are able to see a little more than one side—as much as four-sevenths of its surface—the attitude of the moon in relation to the earth letting us, as it were, look round the edge. This phenomenon, which was traced by Galileo to its true cause, is explained as follows by the writers before us: 'The centro of motion of the moon being the centre of the earth, it is clear that an observer, on the surface of the latter, looks down upon the rising moon as from an eminence, and thus he is enabled to see more or less over or around her. As the moon increases in altitude, the line of sight gradually becomes parallel to the line joining the observer and the centre of the earth, and at length he looks her full in the face: he loses the full view, and catches another side-face view as she nears the horizon in setting.' These changes in the point of view, have greatly facilitated the taking of pictorial photographs of the moon's surface.

These photographs can, of course, be executed only in a calm and clear atmosphere, when the moon is at the full, and to wait for such opportunities great patience is required. If all other circumstances be favourable, the atmosphere is partly cleared by the action of the moon, for its rays, though ordinarily described as cold—the cold chaste moon—partake in a small degree of the heat of sunshine, and accordingly exert a dispersive influence on the clouds. A succession of clear moonlight nights is known to farmers to have a ripening effect on grain.

Looked at even with the naked eye, the moon is not a uniformly clear body. It has dusky and light spots, signifying that it has an irregular surface. The dusky portions, which collectively cover about two-thirds of the disc, were at one time considered to be seas, and such they are sometimes still called. Close examination by powerful telescopes shews that these sea-like spaces are only plains, on which there are comparatively few prominences to reflect the sun's light. The features of the moon's disc which rivet attention are prominences mostly in the shape of circular craters of volcanoes, some of vast dimensions, and many of a small size. Besides these circular markings, which, so to speak, give a pock-pitted appearance to the whole surface, there are stretches of rugged and

picturesque mountains of great altitude, all seemingly of volcanic origin. The circular crater-form markings are diverse in character. In some cases they appear as if crowning mountain-heaps of ashes and cinders, in the manner of Etna and Vesuvius; in other instances, where the edges of the craters do not rise high above the plains, the volcanoes resemble prodigious hollows, miles in breadth and depth. That the whole have at one time been in volcanic action, is obvious from the fact, that at the bottom of the craters are seen the remains of the small tapering cones, whence the lava and ashes were projected.

The picture-map of the moon contained in the work before us, presents the outlines of two hundred and twenty-eight craters, and as these are only on one side, we may conclude that there is fully as great a number on the other—say, upwards of five hundred in all. The bulk of those which are visible are near what we would call the upper part of the moon, from which the clustering becomes less dense, but with several large craters here and there down to the lower limb. It may not be generally known, that, in course of time, astronomers have given names to the whole of the two hundred and twenty-eight craters above mentioned, leaving many smaller ones (big enough, perhaps, if we were at them) without any name at all. The names assigned have been those of men distinguished in science and literature in ancient and modern times; such as, Plato, Pliny, Copernicus, Tycho, Linnaeus, Mercator, Descartes, and so on. Even to the seemingly flat spaces called seas, there are names in Latin, as *Mare Tranquillitatis*, *Mare Nubium*, &c. A range of mountains is named after the Apennines, and another range is called the Caucasus. In this way, a proper map of the moon is about as full of names as a map of the world.

About two-thirds down from the top of the moon, and nearer the side opposite our right, than the middle, there is a peculiarly grand crater, finely rounded, measuring forty-six miles in diameter, and having sides rising to a height of twelve thousand feet. There are wider and higher craters, but none stands out so beautifully. It is distinct to the naked eye, but is well defined by telescopes of a small power. In a clear moonlight night, any one may have a good view of it with a field-glass. This volcano is named Copernicus. Radiating from it are bright streaks more than a hundred miles long, which are thought to represent cracks or chasms in the solid crust of the moon, through which, at some terrible upheaval, molten matter had been poured. Copernicus was evidently the centre of a vast amphitheatre of volcanic action, for the district around it is for a great distance dotted over with small craters, which had given relief to the internal disturbance. Tycho, standing in the midst of a crowded group near the upper limb, is also a magnificent crater, fifty-four miles in diameter, with bright radiating streaks. Lower down, there are craters close on each other, of considerably greater dimensions, one of them being upwards of a hundred miles across, alongside of which, any volcanic opening in the earth would be insignificant.

To have produced these phenomena, the moon must originally have been in a molten state, or, at least, in a state of intense heat, with a hardened crust. From the prodigious number of craters,

eruptive forces had at one time raged throughout. When they ceased, and the moon cooled down into the cold mass it has now become, science does not explain. Nor are we acquainted with the nature of the heat that had produced the volcanic action, further than that it might be due to that concentration of nebulous matter, that we spoke of in relation to the sun. However it may have come, it has long since radiated off into space, to such an extent as to leave the surface rigid and dead. We called the earth a cooling cinder. The moon is a cinder cooled, like a bit of dry slag turned out of a furnace.

Devoid of water and air, the moon has no moisture hovering about it, no clouds: it accordingly has no twilight. When the sun sets upon it, there is utter darkness. There being no air to convey vibrations, there can be no sound. Eternal silence reigns over its surface. With such privations, there is necessarily an absence of animal life. There can be no inhabitants where there is no food to eat, no water to drink, or air to breathe. Were there any inhabitants, they would require to be strangely constituted. On the earth, our day of four-and-twenty hours affords us in a general way twelve hours' light for ordinary occupations, and twelve hours' darkness, which we may appropriate for nocturnal rest. As in the moon, the length of a day is a whole month, the people in it, if there were any, would have alternately a fortnight for work, and a fortnight for sleep. Their physical constitution, their habits, would be all different from ours. What a contrast between the condition of the earth and its sub-planet! Associated together by an inexorable law, and both partaking of sunshine, one of the spheres teems with life, has its grateful vicissitudes of atmospheric influence, and its varying seasons; the other, naked and bare of any trace of organisation, with an alternation of glare and gloom never varying in its dread monotony.

From all this, one is naturally led to speculate on the reasons for the moon's existence. To what good purpose was a spherical mass of volcanic rock sent spinning round the world? It would be as presumptuous to say what were all the objects of creation, as to define positively what was the special origin of the moon. According to the cosmogony which we sketched in speaking of the sun, the earth, while yet a revolving globe of fire-mist, threw off, or, in cooling and contracting, left behind it a portion of its own substance, which became the moon; just as the earth itself and the other primary planets were left behind by the shrinking of the central mass—the sun. All this, however, is only more or less, a probable theory. Be this as it may, there the moon is, a sub-planet, on which there has been impressed a certain servile office of a double and far from unimportant purpose. Its first and most obvious use is to give moonlight. This has been understood from the earliest age, and is duly recorded in the Scripture narrative. The more important, but less recognisable of its uses, is to create the tides, and thereby cause a continual and wholesome agitation in the waters of the ocean. Its distance, its size, its density, are nicely adjusted to produce this result. Were there no moon, tides, except the comparatively slight rise and fall produced by the sun, would cease, and seas might suffer a degree of stagnation detrimental to human

life. While influencing the ocean by its powers of attraction, and even in some degree affecting great inland fresh-water seas like Lake Ontario, the moon is now understood to exert no physical influence on the mental condition of man or beast. The term lunatic might very properly be dropped. Whether the moons pertaining to some of the other planets—Jupiter having four, and Saturn being provided with eight—play the same part regarding tides as the earth's satellite, we need not here inquire. Our own single moon is clearly a valuable appendage, and let us be thankful for its gratuitous and beneficial services.

W. O.

THE WELSH FUSILIERS.

THE recent return of the troops from Ashantee has set many non-military folks speculating on the designations of our regiments; the use of numbers in some cases and names in others, and the frequent combination of both. The meaning of *Fusilier*, also, is not well known; nor why it is that one particular regiment possesses a goat, which is highly prized by the men as a mark of distinction.

Names are more easily remembered than numbers, and are more pleasant to think of, because they suggest or bring up associations. We can more quickly say 23d and 42d than Welsh Fusiliers and Black Watch, but the latter are more agreeable, and (as recent newspaper letters have shewn) more taking with the public. There are a hundred and nine numbered regiments of foot, called the infantry of the line, in the British army; they are numbered 1 to 109 consecutively, and rank in the order of their founding or first establishment. Most of them bear a name as well as a number; sometimes relating to the country in which they were first raised; sometimes to a royal personage; sometimes to the colour of the facings of the uniforms; and occasionally to other circumstances. We will transcribe the first dozen on the list: 1st Foot, Royal Scots; 2d, Queen's Royal; 3d, Buffs; 4th, King's Own; 5th, Northumberland Fusiliers; 6th, Royal 1st Warwickshire; 7th, Royal Fusiliers; 8th, King's; 9th, East Norfolk; 10th, North Lincolnshire; 11th, North Devon; 12th, East Suffolk. So likewise in the cavalry. There are seven line regiments of Dragoon Guards, known not only by numbers but by names: 1st, King's; 2d, Queen's Bays; 3d, Prince of Wales's; 4th, Royal Irish; 5th, Princess Charlotte of Wales's; 6th, Carabiniers; 7th, Princess Royal's.

The word *Fusilier* has not now a definite meaning. It was derived from *fusil*, one of the early forms of musket, and was applied to those troops who bore that weapon. Many officers also carried fusils; but now they carry only swords (with perhaps pistols), while the rank and file all have rifles. The fusil was lighter than the musket, and the fusilier corps were regarded as light infantry. About one in eleven of our foot regiments are still called Fusiliers; namely, 5th Northumberland, 7th Royal, 21st North British, 23d Royal Welsh, 87th Irish, 101st and 104th Bengal, 102d Madras, and 103d Bombay, together with the Scots Fusilier Guards. The reader, therefore, must not expect to see the 23d Fusiliers carrying fusils. Nor must he look for anything Welsh in their garb; although there is generally a strong infusion of Welshmen in the regiment—Griffiths, Llewellyns, and so forth. The regimental colours have a

Prince of Wales's plume in the centre, with the badgo of Edward the Black Prince—a rising sun, a red dragon, and a white horse—at three of the corners; while other parts of the flaunting flag are pretty well covered with the names of famous battles in which the regiment has been engaged.

Few regiments have seen more rough service, or received harder knocks, than the Royal Welsh Fusiliers. When, in 1689, William and Mary found that the deposed James II. was making a stand in Ireland, it was resolved to raise twelve new regiments of foot; among the number was the corps which is the subject of this article, and which was raised mostly in Wales. Twenty years ago, the records of the regiment told that 'the spurs worn by Major Toby Pursell at the battle of the Boyne, are still preserved in the regiment, in the possession of the senior major for the time being.' Most likely the relic is still preserved. Shortly after the conquest of the Jacobites by the Orangemen in Ireland, the 23d embarked for Flanders, and were engaged at the siege of Namur. During the first half of the last century, when the continent was distracted and devastated by wars which we can scarcely disentangle now, the 23d often formed a part of the British contingents; as we find in the history of the struggles at Venloo, Liège, Blenheim, Ulm, Landau, Treves, Ramillies, Ostend, Dettingen, Fontenoy, &c. Later in the century, when the American colonies revolted from the mother-country, the 23d was among the regiments which were sent out to fight (what proved to us to be) inglorious battles. It was present at Lexington, Bunker's Hill, Boston, Long Island, New York, White Plains, Brandywine, Charlestown, and other scenes of conflict. In one of the years, 1778, the men volunteered to act as marines in some of the ships which Admiral Lord Howe brought to bear upon the French, who had sent out a fleet to aid the Americans. This was not easy work, seeing that soldiers are poor creatures at sea, unless they have been trained and drilled as marines. But the men of the 23d appear to have comported themselves bravely and efficiently. Lord Howe gave 'his most particular thanks to the officers and soldiers of the three companies of Royal Welsh Fusiliers, for their spirited and gallant behaviour on board the ships that had engaged the enemy, and to the whole regiment for its conduct during the time it served on board the fleet.' On the termination of the war, when Lord Cornwallis made his complete surrender to the enemy, a treaty was signed; the rank and file became prisoners of war, but the officers were allowed to return to Europe on parole, retaining their private property. There was a little bit of smart practice on this occasion, which was much applauded by the 23d, but which sets us thinking as to what may be the rules of honour in regular war. Captain Peter and another officer saved the regimental colours by wrapping them round their bodies—presumably under their uniforms, and marched off with them under the guise of private property.

In the wars arising out of the French Revolution and the ambitious designs of Bonaparte, the Royal Welsh Fusiliers bore a very conspicuous part, having a full taste of the losses and hardships, battles and triumphs, of an eventful twenty years or so. First at the capture of Port-au-Prince in San Domingo; then in Holland; then with Sir Ralph Abercromby in Egypt; but especially

throughout the whole duration of the Peninsular War. It is not without reason that the 23d bears on its regimental colours the names Corunna, Albuera, Badajoz, Salamanca, Vitoria, Pyrenees, Nivelle, Orthes, and Toulouse. Waterloo, almost as a matter of course, was one scene of operations for the regiment; and the 23d afterwards formed part of the army of occupation at Paris.

A long period of peace gave this corps the usual routine of home, colonial, and India service, without any fighting; but when the Crimean War commenced in 1854, the 23d was one of the regiments sent out. It formed part of Sir George Brown's brigade, in Sir William Codrington's light division. The records of the regiment do not fail to notice the achievement which gained for one of the officers the much coveted Victoria Cross. At the battle of the Alma, when the British troops had crossed the river and mounted the heights in face of a terrible fire of musketry and artillery, Lieutenant Armstrong, who carried the Queen's colour of the 23d, was struck down; whereupon Major O'Connor seized it, advanced to the Russian position in spite of the volleys directed against him, planted it on a Russian redoubt, and defended it until the struggle was over, and the victory won. For this heroic conduct the major was thanked on the field by Sir W. Codrington and Sir G. Brown, and was one of the earliest recipients of the Victoria Cross. Major Hackett is another Royal Welsh Fusilier who is similarly decorated. We need not go through the eventful details of the Crimean War; suffice it to say that the 23d shared the dangers of Inkermann, the Quarries, Sebastopol, and the two attacks on the Redan. When the Indian revolt began in 1857, the Royal Welsh had their usual luck of being in the very thick of it.

What the Royal Welsh has done in the Ashantee region, the newspapers have made pretty well known to all of us.

But how about the *Goat*? Whenever the 23d are engaged on any expedition, the goat is mentioned pretty much as if he were one of the regimental officers—greatly to the puzzlement of civilians. All that is known of the origin of this matter is comprised in a paragraph of Grose's *Military Antiquities*: 'The royal regiment of Welsh Fusiliers has a privileged honour of passing in review preceded by a goat with gilded horns, and adorned with ringlets of flowers. Although this may not come immediately under the denomination of a reward for merit, yet the corps values itself much on the ancient uses of the custom. Every 1st of March, being the anniversary of their tutelar saint, David, the officers give a splendid entertainment to all their Welsh brothers. After the cloth is removed, a bumper is filled round to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales (whose health is always drunk first on that day), the band playing the old tune of *The Noble Race of Shenllyn*; when a handsome drummer-boy, elegantly dressed, mounted on the goat (richly caparisoned for the occasion), is led thrice round the table in procession by the drum-major.' Whether the 'handsome drummer-boy, elegantly dressed,' still takes part in the affair, we do not know; but Cannon's History of the regiment tells an amusing anecdote of one of their anniversaries: 'It happened in 1775, at Boston, that the animal gave such a spring from the floor that he dropped

his rider upon the table; then, bounding over the heads of some officers, he ran to the barracks with all his trappings, to the no small joy of the garrison.'

The goat of the 23d, like the sovereign, never dies; at least, when he really dies, no time is lost in proclaiming a successor. On the decease of the goat in 1844, the Queen presented to the regiment two fine specimens, selected from the flock at Windsor Forest, which had been presented to her by the (then) Shah of Persia. The regiment usually comprising two battalions, one goat was presented to each. In a coloured engraving, representing the uniforms of the regiment in 1850, the goat is brought in, a fine animal with an ample white shaggy coat, and an heraldic or regimental badge fixed to his forehead between the roots of the horns.

The late goat was not among the heroes who entered Coomassie. He accompanied the regiment from England to Cape Coast Castle; but there the poor fellow, like many of his bipedal companions, sickened and died. His horns have been, or are now being, made into an ornament for the mess-table of the officers of the 23d, while his skin is being carefully dressed into parchment for a new drum-head. The presentation of another goat by the Queen, at a recent review in Windsor Park, is fresh in the memory of all readers; while spectators will remember that the new-comer gave some trouble to the drum-major, to drill him into regimental etiquette.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER XXIV.—A NIGHT ALARM.

It was more than a week after that stir about the light in the garden that Maggie was awakened from slumber by what she at first fancied was the striking of the clock upon the stairs; with drowsy semi-consciousness, she found herself counting the strokes, and wondering that it was not yet the midnight hour; it seemed to her that they were uneven; but if they had been one or two, she would probably have fallen asleep again, without mental investigation of the matter, but when they stopped at eleven she was broad awake. It was not only that such could not be the time, since she had retired to rest after that hour, but it also inconsequentially occurred to her that it was between eleven and twelve that the mysterious light had been seen in the toolhouse. The two inexplicable circumstances wove themselves together in her mind, and filled it with a nameless dread. Then, as she lay quite still, listening and thinking, the clock began to strike again, one, two, three, with even a duller thud than usual, and then for an instant the little house seemed shaken to its foundations. 'John, John!' cried she, in the hushed voice in which Terror speaks when Reason is not disturbed, 'did you hear that?' He did not answer, and in his silence there was another cause of alarm, because that wondrous sense, for which we have no name, but which warns us of the presence of a fellow-creature, thinking with ourselves, or of us, when he would fain have us believe otherwise, convinced her that her husband was awake. He suffered

much from sleeplessness, but when he did sleep, it was heavily, and he drew his breath with evenness and regularity, as such sleepers do. His breathing was regular and even now, but it was not natural; and pitch-dark as it was, she knew that his eyes were open, and that he was listening as intently as herself. All was silent now, but she felt, that not in the lapse of years could she ever be persuaded to attribute what she had just heard to fancy.

'O John, I am so frightened!' continued Maggie; 'pray, speak to me.'

'What is it, darling? Did you speak?'

His words were tender, but his voice was hoarse and broken; if she had not known him to be a man to whom fear was unknown, she would have thought it shaken with fear.

'There is some one in the house—or under it: I am certain of it, John. There was a shock just now like that of an earthquake.'

'I did not hear it,' was his cold reply.

'Nor the clock that struck eleven and then three? What can it mean?'

'It means that you have been dreaming, Maggie.'

'I have not been dreaming,' answered she vehemently. 'Let me strike a light.' She was about to rise, but he laid his hand upon her arm—a hand as strong, and as cold, as iron.

'No, Maggie; you will catch your death such a night as this. I will get up myself if—it comes again.'

'Then you did hear it?'

'I heard something fall. You are not so used to lie awake as I am, or the voices of the night would not alarm you. How quiet everything is now!'

Stillness reigned supreme; the very tick of that clock on the stairs could be heard as it marked the time towards the blessed daylight; and presently, with a whirl and a rattle, it struck five.

'There!' cried he triumphantly; 'is that an hour, think you, for burglars to be about a house? Go to sleep again; forget your foolish fears.'

Maggie did not reply; she was thinking how much more sharp was the ring of the clock than the sound which she had taken for it. Sleep was not to be thought of; but she lay mute and still; and when the first streaks of daylight stole into the room, her husband softly rose, and she heard him stand and listen on the stairs, and then descend into the parlour, which lay immediately beneath their own apartment. She was not frightened now, but intensely curious, the more so because her husband had shewn himself curious too. She had an idea that he would rather she should not have heard him rise, yet, when he returned, she could not abstain from questioning him.

'Did you find anything, John, to explain that dreadful noise last night?'

'Why, yes, my dear. Your earthquake was caused by the fall of the *Plains of Heaven*. The nail seems to have given way, and then down it came.'

This was a huge engraving of Martin's famous picture, that the Linches had given them as a marriage present, and which occupied one whole

side of the little room. What seemed very strange to Maggie was that, notwithstanding its great weight it was quite uninjured and even the glass unbroken; and she half-suspected that in his eagerness to account for what had caused her such great alarm, her husband had taken the picture down himself and laid it on the floor.

However, nothing more was said between them upon the subject; and upon inquiring of the servant-maid, it turned out that no noise had disturbed her; the slumber of such girls, however, as her mistress was aware, is commonly very sound, and, moreover, she slept in an attic, removed by another floor from the locality of the disturbance. When the shades of evening began to fall that day, Maggie felt more nervous than she would have cared to own, and though, in accordance with her husband's wish, she retired to rest earlier than usual, by reason of her 'bad night,' it seemed to her that she should never get to sleep. If, however, there is one means to woo the drowsy god more certain than another—that is, if all are not alike useless, from counting imaginary sheep to repeating *Paradise Regained*—it is watching and listening; and when the eleventh hour, which she had grown somehow to associate with the uncanny sound that haunted her, had come and gone, she succumbed to her fatigues of mind and body. Something worse, however, than unrest awaited her: a terrible dream, wherein she seemed to be buried alive in a stone vault: one person only knew of it—her husband, and though he worked away day and night with a pickaxe to remove the stones and rescue her, his progress was very slow, and she felt her vital powers deserting her. It seemed to her that he had begun his toil where the wall was thickest, and she strove in vain to make her voice heard through the stone, and to direct him elsewhere. In her struggles to do so, she awoke, and before that sense of freedom and relief which comes so slowly to him who wakens from a nightmare, could fully dawn, she was beset by a new horror. She was awake, she knew, and safe in her own bed, and yet there were the sounds of the pickaxe, one, two, three, and every now and then the thud of a falling stone, just as she heard them in her dream.

'John, John! that noise again! Do you hear it now? Wake, wake!' She felt, as before, quite certain that he was wide awake, but cried out thus from terror, and mere yearning for companionship.

'I hear it,' answered her husband faintly, like one who is an eager listener. 'It is rats in the basement.'

'It is *not* rats, John,' replied she confidently. 'We had them in Mitchell Street very badly, but they never made a noise like that. If a shock comes such as came last night'—The words had scarcely left her lips when a shock even more violent than on the previous occasion did come, so that the very floor beneath them seemed to tremble.

'That came from the parlour, or else from the cellar beneath it, John. Let me strike a light.' Before he could restrain or even forbid her, Maggie had leaped out of bed, and lit her candle. Its tiny rays, in place of shedding on her that comfort which light alone can give in such moments of terror,

disclosed a new object of alarm. Her husband was sitting up in bed, pale and ghastly, his eyes starting from their sockets, and with that awful look of expectation in them, which she had noticed on the day when she first proposed communicating with Richard. Since she knew that he had the heart of a lion, this spectacle of him overcome with abject fear, affected her more than even the very cause of his alarm.

'Dear husband,' cried she consolingly, and even in that terrible moment careful to hide her perception of his weakness, 'you are ill, and shiver with the cold. There is no need for you to rise, since, if thieves are about the house, they will see the candle, and know that some of us are stirring, which will pack them off as quickly as the sight of yourself.'

'It is not thieves,' muttered her husband hoarsely, and his teeth chattered together as he spoke.

'But what else *can* it be?' reasoned Maggie, her ears less attentive for his reply than for the sounds beneath, which still continued, though with less distinctness.

'Stay; I have it: it must be some one breaking into the cellar.'

In an instant her husband was out of bed, and had thrown his dressing-gown around him, in the pocket of which he slipped a life-preserver. So terrible was the anger in his pale face that she cried out as he left the room: 'You would not kill a man for stealing wine, John!'

'Stay here, Maggie; don't move,' was his only answer, given in a voice of authority, and almost of menace, such as he had never used before. His temporary panic seemed to have quite passed away, and he was himself again; strong, resolute, and a terror to evil-doers, she feared not for him at all, but only for the life of the thieving wretch who should chance to cross him. Instead of the slow and hesitating step with which he had descended into the parlour on the previous morning, he took the stairs in three bounds, and the next instant she heard him open the front door and leave the house. She was not surprised at this, for if there had been any attempt to steal the wine from the cellar, it must needs have been made from the outside. Now all was silence. For full twenty minutes she remained watching and waiting, but restrained by her husband's injunctions from making any effort to seek him. She had understood from his manner of forbidding her to leave the room that he did not wish the servants to be roused or made acquainted with what had happened. With fingers that trembled even more with anxiety than with cold—though it was a bitter December night—she, however, partially dressed herself, in case her presence should be required. The room looked out to the front, in the contrary direction from that which her husband had taken, and in any case it was too dark to make out any object, save close at hand; but she had thrown up the sash, and having put out her candle, sat at the open window, listening with intense anxiety. The security she had felt about his personal safety was not shaken; if there had been a struggle of any kind, it must have reached her in that still night; nay, she felt certain that if John had spoken, far less cried out, on the opposite side of the house, she must have heard him. What sort of robber, then, must this be, who, on being discovered at his nefarious trade, neither spoke nor

was spoken to? She had begun to think that her husband had discovered nothing, and was making a perambulation of the whole premises, when she heard footsteps coming towards her from an unexpected direction—that of the toolhouse. They were those of more than one person, and moved so very stealthily, that had she not caught their crunch upon the gravel as they crossed from lawn to lawn, they might have escaped her attention. Then, for the first time since her husband left her, she entertained apprehensions for his safety. Was it possible that these men, whoever they were, had overpowered and disabled him, and were now coming to rob the house? For herself she felt no fear; on the contrary, a firm resolve to recognise these ruffians, and avenge their victim, took possession of her mind. She leaned out of the window, and peered keenly down into the darkness. The men were now immediately beneath her, and about to enter at the front door, which had not been closed. One of them was her husband; the other she could not make out, yet his form did not seem wholly unfamiliar to her. Who *could* it be? And why was John bringing him under his roof after such a deed? He was not his prisoner, for her husband was leading the way, and the other following. The door was closed behind them softly, and presently she heard in the parlour the quick spurt of a match, and then voices speaking in muffled tones. She would not disobey her husband even now, by leaving the room, but, in the intensity of her curiosity, she lay down with her ear to the floor, and listened. She could hear nothing that was said, only that for the most part it was John that was the speaker, while the other man put in occasionally what sounded like a curt sentence, and now and then he laughed.

Perhaps it was the time and circumstance making it anomalous and out of place, but this laugh had a peculiar significance for her, a sort of weird malice; it seemed scoffing, incredulous, and cruel. It was never echoed by her husband; but whenever it occurred, there was a pause, and then his quiet tones were heard, it seemed to her in expostulation.

The clock on the stairs had struck twice while they were thus engaged (though so rapid had she been in what was going on, that she had not taken note of the particular hour), and had given warning for doing so the third time, when, after a longer pause in the talk than usual, she heard her husband come softly up the stairs. She knew it was he by his footfall, else she would not have known his voice when he addressed her.

'Hist, hist!' said he; 'not a word above your breath. Where are you, Maggie?'

'I am here,' answered she softly. 'I put out the light, because'—

'You were right,' answered he quickly. 'No matter why—ask no questions; and if you can find what I require without a candle, do so. The bottle of terminable ink is not in the parlour: can you give it me?'

Maggie's sense of order was acute; without that fidgetiness which insists upon every article being 'in its proper place,' and is the curse of comfort, she knew where everything in her own house was to be found.

'I used that bottle in experiments; but there is a new one in the cupboard calculated for shorter time'—she was already passing her hand along a

shelf of it, in swift but cautious search, as a child catches a fly. 'Yes, here it is!'

'Did the experiment succeed?'

'Perfectly: the sheet of paper on which the words were written became blank at the very hour to which they were computed. This is calculated for but one week exactly.'

As their hands met in the darkness, and her husband took the bottle she held out, he drew her towards him, pressed her to his heart, and imprinted upon her forehead a kiss so long and loving that it might have been one of farewell. Then, heaving a deep sigh, he turned, and took his way, as silently as he had come, back to his unknown companion.

CHAPTER XXV.—GROWN OLD.

Women are born watchers; their patient and unselfish nature fits them to be the companions of Sickness and of Pain through the long hours of the pitiless night; and Maggie was no novice in that noble sisterhood; but her watch this night was of a far different sort from those she had passed by her sick father's bed; there had been anxiety in them; but in this case there was, besides, a weird and nameless terror, a devouring curiosity, which, nevertheless, she feared to gratify; a mysterious dread, like that entertained for some ghostly visitor, except that it did not vanish with the dawn.

That awful night had been, as it were, divided into two scenes, if such they could be called, wherein scarce aught had been visible to her outward eyes; with one brief interval between them, almost as appalling as themselves, during which her husband had come up to her with his strange request, but without one word of explanation or of comfort. He had afterwards remained below-stairs fully as long as he had done at first, during which the same muffled talk had gone on, though not so continuously as before. One of the two seemed to be writing, and the other suggesting or objecting. Then a chair was pushed away from the table, a word or two spoken with emphasis, but not so loud that she could catch its meaning, and their long clandestine interview had come to an end. There was no good-bye nor word of parting between those two, as her husband let the stranger out at the front-door. Whether the latter was a thief or not, Maggie felt that they were deadly enemies. Her instincts, always keen and delicate, were wrought to their utmost pitch, and attained truths beyond the reach of logic. Before her husband had returned, she took care to seek her pillow, and affect the slumber which he would be well aware could not be real. She yearned to ask a score of questions, but she would not pain him by asking one. He would be sure to tell her if it was well for him to tell; but he had said 'Ask no questions,' on his late brief visit, in such a voice as was not to be gainsaid, and which had seemed to appeal even more than to command. If she had loved him more, or perhaps if he had loved her less, if he had given her no such overwhelming proofs of his devotion to herself, she might have insisted upon sharing his secret, since he and she were one. But she felt that there had been no such justification in her case, and therefore her generous heart paid him the tribute of silence. Nevertheless, it was a

grievous tax. He had returned, as before, without a light, and sought his couch without a word. They had lain side by side for hours, each broad awake, and each aware that the other was so, and both occupied with the same subject, to one an engrossing fact, to the other as engrossing a speculation. To Maggie, every moment intensified the mystery, and deepened the horror of it. Suppose he should never tell her! Would it be possible, she wondered, to share bed and board with him for her whole life long, under such circumstances? Men had kept secrets from their wives before, but surely not secrets that the one possessed, and the other half-possessed, and of which, he must needs know, she had a passionate desire to obtain the full possession.

Some pretence of mutual ignorance was absolutely necessary for domestic concord, and here there could be no pretence. She resolved to submit; but she felt that submission, both in its pain and in its self-denial, would be little short of martyrdom.

Her husband's persistent silence would be equivalent to a continuous expression of his want of confidence in her prudence, or her love. She could not persuade herself to grant that, in this case, he might be correct in his judgment, though in all others she acknowledged its superiority to her own. True, it was not likely that what had occurred that night would for ever remain a mystery; but the satisfaction of discovering it for herself, or of having it disclosed to her by another, would be small, indeed, as compared with its revelation from his own lips. Yet, why should he ever tell her, if not now? If not now, while they were alone together in darkness and silence, immediately after the event itself had happened, and while he could not but be aware that her curiosity was burning to be gratified, though her tongue was dumb. Every moment of mutual silence put explanation farther and further away. Her reticence had already been accepted by him—doubtless, with gratitude, and with the full sense of the self-sacrifice it had cost her—and it was like taking back a gift to importune him now. There was but one chance of the veil being lifted: perhaps, through all those hours, he was debating with himself how best to break to her some terrible news—for that was the shape the thing had taken with her by this time—and was waiting for daylight to mitigate its horror.

But the night passed, and the dawn broke, without one word from him. She saw it steal in at the uncurtained pane—for she had forgotten to draw the blind when she reclosed the window—and flood the room with its cold light; but he still lay beside her without a sound, without a breath. Was it possible that he was dead? She had heard of people affected by unsuspected heart-disease who had perished in that manner, after some agitation or excitement. This thought, at first merely one of those ghastly notions that flit at times across even well-balanced minds, began to grow upon her till it had attained a grim reality. In fear and trembling, she raised herself upon her elbow, and turned to look at him—then uttered a piteous cry.

He opened his eyes, and drowsily demanded what was the matter.

'I have had a dreadful dream,' she said, 'and was frightened.'

She was frightened still, to judge by her wild looks; but he took no notice of them.

'It is still early, is it not, dear?'

'Yes; still early.'

She had sunk back upon the pillow, glad to lose sight of him. His long brown hair had turned white. She had heard of such changes following on some terrible shock, and credited them, as one credits miracles; but a miracle that happens under one's own eyes is astounding, for all that. At the first glance, she had absolutely believed him to be another person. Had he been conscious of the change, when he had come up to her room last night without a candle? No. He had done that for the same reason that he had bidden her be silent—to lead his companion below-stairs to imagine that no other person in the house save him was cognisant of his presence. She had thought out all that hours ago. Besides, if he knew it, he must needs have spoken of it, when his eyes met hers: this was no secret that he could hide from her, or from anybody; though it made that other secret, which he would not tell, ten times more terrible.

Had he seen his brother Richard's ghost?

It had seemed a while ago that nothing could have exceeded for her the horrors of the previous night; but the morning—the morning that is said to bring joy to the sorrowful, and confidence to the terror-stricken—had only brought her a worse thing. Above-stairs, she heard the servant stirring, and in the road without, the wheels of the market-carts going into town; all the life and motion of the day were beginning, but not for her. She had often pictured to herself, when her father was ill, how sad it had been for him to lie powerless upon his bed the long day through, and sigh in vain to be at his work, while others laboured around him! But now she felt herself in worse case even than that. She might go about her usual avocations, but they would have no power to win her thoughts from this intolerable mystery, whereof her husband kept the key. She could not help the intrusion of these reflections, but she did her best to drive them back; and in a measure she succeeded. Selfish and querulous as they were, their very presence, and the justification of it, suggested their own cure. If she was thus troubled by her ignorance of what had happened, what must her husband be by his knowledge of it, which had thus brought upon him a sudden and premature old age! She took courage to look round at him again, not furtively, as before, but making him aware that she was about to do so: she knew that he would drop his eyelids, and feign slumber; and he did so. How noble and handsome he looked—but the beauty of his face was no longer that of a statue; it resembled rather that of a corpse! Not only had the hue of health departed from it, but the features were pinched and sharp, the cheeks sunk and worn, as with long illness, the hollows beneath the eyelids dark, though lustrous; only a half-stifled sigh proclaimed that the pain was not over yet. It was his hair, however, that most attracted her attention; it had not turned white, as she had at first imagined; the cold light of the dawn had intensified its transformation; but without doubt it had changed to gray—not a thread here and there, as is often seen, even in very young men—but altogether. The alteration could not escape the notice even of the least observant; to conceal it was impossible, and it would be

absolutely necessary to account for it. Could she persuade him to stay in bed and feign illness, so that she might tend him for a time, alone, and then give out that pain of body, not of mind, had changed him so? It was a poor and shallow device enough, but since no other chance presented itself, it seemed feasible.

'John, dear?' said she softly.

'I hear you,' answered he, in as low a tone, but freighted with no tenderness, as hers was; not that it was unkind, but to her sensitive ear it suggested indifference—the knowledge that the worst has happened that can happen, and that there is no remedy—the indifference of despair. 'What is it, Maggie?'

'I wish to ask a favour of you.'

A piteous moan broke from his lips.

'It is no question, John,' continued she hastily. 'Do not fear that I shall ask what it may pain you to reply to. If it is your good pleasure to be silent upon what occurred last night, I shall respect your silence. I need not tell you my own wishes upon that subject, for you must know them. It is something—and I thank you for it—that you do not attempt to deceive me. You shall keep your secret—if needs must.' Here her hand sought his, as though in ratification of that promise, and he carried it to his lips and kissed it—so eagerly, that if he had been her slave, and she some eastern tyrant who had granted to him, unasked, his forfeit life, he could not have shewn a more reverent, nay, abject gratitude. 'The favour I would beg of you, John, is simply, that you will keep your bed this morning, or at least your room.'—

'It is impossible!' interrupted he, in a hoarse whisper: 'I dare not.'

'Dare not? Then there is danger in this matter, as I feared,' thought Maggie. 'He has been overpowered by villains, and only had his life spared upon condition that he should not breathe a word of their presence here last night. He has promised to go about his usual business, and comport himself in all things as though no such outrage had occurred. A wild and improbable idea, as she recognised it to be, even while she entertained it, but was not every circumstance about her become wild and dreamlike? That John had not asked the reason of her singular request, was itself astounding, and only explicable on the ground, that things much more singular as well as serious were filling his mind.

'Is it for fear of calling attention to what happened last night, John? I am asking for your own sake, be sure of that,' added Maggie hastily, for a look of piteous pleading crossed his face, as though he would have reminded her of her promise—'that you would get up'—

'Yes, yes; I must get up,' interrupted he, like one talking to himself; 'I must go to office; there must be nothing different to-day from what was yesterday.'

'But there is something different, John—something very, very different.'

She hesitated to tell him what had happened to him. An absurd story, that had once made her laugh at some old man, a friend of her father's, who had taken to a Welsh wig, came into her mind; how everybody had stared, and giped at him, and made him miserable, till at last he threw it into the fire, and went back to his gray hairs again.

'Different?' whispered her husband, holding his hands before him, and regarding them with great interest—an action that she had somewhere seen before. 'I see nothing.'

'It is not in your hands, John, dear; it is in your face—your hair, that has turned gray.'

She had risen and brought a hand-glass, that he might convince himself of the truth of her statement; but he did not even look at it.

'Gray, am I?' said he. The simple faith with which he accepted the astounding fact, since her words had spoken it, went to Maggie's heart. 'Well, I am no worse for that. It proves nothing.'

'Nay, dear, but it must needs excite attention—comment, and you know what a gossip Mrs Morden is. My notion is, that you should keep your room, and affect some sharp illness, so that the change should not seem so sudden, nor excite such wonder. If I could only get you away from Rosebank without being seen, then, after a week or two'—

'Leave Rosebank?' exclaimed he vehemently, and rising from the pillow into a sitting posture, as though moved by an electric shock. 'That would be madness.'

'I know you have always an objection to leave home,' continued Maggie quietly, and purposely ignoring his excitement; 'and if that is insurmountable, the next best thing you can do is to feign illness in your own room. I will give orders to Mrs Morden that you are not to be disturbed, and will bring you up your meals myself.'

This arrangement of Maggie's was not so much agreed to by her husband as tacitly acquiesced in. Important as it evidently was, in his eyes, to keep matters quiet, and all things in their usual track, the plan to effect it had apparently no interest with him, while the singular transformation that had necessitated it seemed scarcely to have awakened his surprise. He lay mostly with closed eyes, as though the growing light annoyed them, without movement, and, unless addressed, in silence; while Maggie proceeded with her toilet, herself full of anxious thought. The necessity for action, however, brought her some relief; she had to make up her mind what to say to the housekeeper, and what to her father, regarding John's pretended illness, that should suggest its being serious, and at the same time exclude their presence from his bedside. To pronounce it to be contagious would, in their case, she well knew, be no prohibition; and, moreover, it would necessitate calling in a doctor. She knew of no complaint—and indeed perhaps there was none—the effect of which was to 'age' its victim, as last night's events had worked with John.

As she left the room, she stooped down unsought and kissed his forehead, an action rare with her, and which, yesterday, would have evoked his tenderest smile. He looked up, and tried to smile, as she had seen her father do, during his late illness: the very muscles, as in his case, seemed to refuse their office. But her husband's eyes told a different tale—it was not physical paralysis that forbade his smiling, but the burden of an intolerable woe that weighed him down, and which he would not suffer her to share. If she had been Richard's wife, she would have fallen on her knees, and besought his confidence, certain that, no matter what his gloom, she had the gift to brighten it; it might have been shame, or even crime, and yet she would not have despaired of giving him

comfort; but in John's case, though there could be neither shame nor crime, she was doubtful of her powers. She could do only her loving duty to him, as best she might, another way.

A LADY'S RAMBLES ROUND THE WORLD.

AMONG a number of books of travels which have lately appeared, there is one of an eccentric and particularly noticeable character, styled *Teresina Peregrina*, purporting to be an account of fifty thousand miles of travel round the world, by 'Thérèse Yelverton (Viscountess Avonmore)'. Whether the authoress be entitled to so designate herself, is not for us to inquire. All we know is, that, owing to the disgraceful state of the marriage laws in the United Kingdom, some ladies have a difficulty in knowing what to call themselves, or to know who they exactly are. It happens that a lady may, as she thinks, be a married woman in Scotland, and yet be no married woman at all, and that she may be a sufferer from a similar misapprehension in Ireland; while, as concerns England, an accidental error in some paltry minutiae will render a seemingly good marriage ceremony altogether nugatory. The outcome of all this confusion is, of course, a prodigious amount of litigation, much to the benefit of lawyers, and not a little distress of mind to those ladies who chance to be victimised.

Mrs Thérèse Yelverton, to call her so, has, as everybody knows, been one of these victims, and in her hapless condition of being married and yet not married, has endeavoured to derive some solacement by travelling about like a heroine in search of adventures, and undergoing perils in distant semi-savage countries, which even few men of nerve would care to encounter. It is far from being clear that her peregrinations extended to fifty thousand miles, but she appears at any rate to have got over a great deal of ground, and to have seen many remote and rarely visited places. Her wanderings being dictated by fancy, she presents no regular narrative, either as regards dates or means of transit; but, like a butterfly zigzagging in its flight from flower to flower, she skips frolicsomenely from scene to scene, just as the whim of the moment directs—her guiding principle, as far as we can see, being a determination to undertake journeys which, as fraught with personal danger, she was counselled by friends not to attempt. Her descriptions and remarks are, for the most part, light and graceful. She is never heavy or dull. There is, throughout, a dash of genius and sense of the ludicrous, with occasionally, however, a certain asperity of feeling, for which, all circumstances considered, there is every extenuation.

Thérèse begins with the United States, in which she says she travelled twenty thousand miles, but confines herself chiefly to a visit to Salt Lake, in order to have a look at the Mormons. It was hinted by American friends that she should 'go well armed, take no money, never utter a syllable

upon their peculiar institutions; and not stay long.' Her experiences falsified these forebodings. What she saw, struck her with agreeable surprise. Contrary to what has been ordinarily said of them, she finds the Mormons, both men and women, a contented, well-disposed set of people, pious in their way, and their community undisfigured by the spectacle of vice, rags, and wretchedness, that signalises our social system. At a ball which she attended, the girls were quietly and nicely dressed, without the pretence of extravagant fashion, and all went off most decorously. 'On the Sunday,' she says, 'we attended the Tabernacle, and were much surprised to see a congregation amounting to over two thousand—not of pleasure-seekers or idle spectators (such as form the congregations of great popular preachers like Spurgeon and Ward Beecher), but of earnest, devout, religious people, who came to the temple to worship and obtain instruction. It was not the fashionable assembly for the display of style or mock-piety.'

On quitting the city of the Mormons, and getting among the commonplace run of people in the western regions, she presents an amusing account of a band of American lady-tourists, who, bloomer-fashion, rode astride on horses, and formed a strange cavalcade. 'Ladies whose hair grew on their own heads, usually wore it à la mermaid, the comb, however, which would have been useful, replaced by a riding-switch. One lady mermaid shared the fate of Absalom, her hair catching in the boughs of a tree, where for a second her horse left her, and whence she fell to the ground, and was gathered up affectionately by her admirers, fortunately unhurt. Some ladies who do not grow their own hair, are obliged to have the larger portion of their head strapped on, owing to the jolting of the horse. Others had what appeared at first a coral-like fungus growing out of their heads, which, upon closer investigation, turned out to be an enormous sponge, worn for the purpose of keeping the head cool. Others, desperately resolved on the preservation of their complexion, had contrived calico masks, which they fastened on to their faces, with apertures for the eyes and mouth—ghastly spectacles, like so many mourners riding to their own funerals.' A very queer set-out altogether!

From San Francisco, as we suppose, she skips to the Sandwich Islands, where the scenery is lovely beyond description, an earthly paradise. Here, she is received as a person of distinction by His Hawaiian Majesty (the lately deceased king), who was graciously pleased to offer her a thousand acres of land at a picturesque spot to induce her to settle in his dominions. Thérèse declining the gift, quitted this insular Eden; and the next thing we hear of her is that she is in China. At Hong-kong, Canton, and other places, there is much to describe as concerns the habits of the people, their dresses, and the interiors of their houses—if they can be called interiors, for the Chinese habitations are all exterior—nothing

closed in, no windows to shut, no doors to open, no private apartments, the whole consisting of that combination of open bowers, with trellises and curtains, amidst slips of garden, such as we see pictured on old dinner-plates of the willow pattern. As to beds, the indwellers sleep on a kind of hard bench; every female having a notch in the wood, into which she fits her head on lying down. In virtue of her sex, our authoress was allowed to investigate these domestic arrangements, and to pick up an acquaintance with the female inmates. In one house, her white hands formed a subject of vital interest. A dozen questions assailed her as to how she made them white. One of the elderly women 'rubbed and pinched' them, under the impression that she could extract a little colour. She rolled up my wide sleeve to the shoulder, to find where the white colouring commenced on my arms. The applause was great; they considered them the acme of artistic skill, for even the fairest Chinese has a darkish yellow skin.'

Voyaging southwards, Thérèse next casts up in the Indo-chinese peninsula, comprehending Cochin-China and Siam, with the lesser territory of Cambodia or Campuchia, noted for the growth of the gamboge tree. Accidentally she becomes acquainted with a French gentleman, a wonderfully clever talker, who asked her if she 'had visited that great wonder of the world, Angkor-Wat.' She never had heard of such a place. What or where was it? Angkor-Wat is the ruin of a Buddhist temple, a thing as grand and interesting as the Pyramids; it had miles of inscriptions, and no end of figures carved in stone. But it was far distant, and the journey to it most hazardous. No woman had ever been there. She would perish if she attempted to go to it. Deserts and rivers would require to be encountered. The more that was said to dissuade her, the more she determined to proceed to Angkor-Wat. Carrying out her intentions, attended by an interpreter, she reaches the capital of Campuchia, where the king gives her a charming reception, and she is treated with courteous hospitality by the ladies of the palace. We are favoured with an account of some strange court ceremonies; but passing these over, we hurry on with our heroine to Angkor-Wat, situated at the head of the lake Tonlisap, the waters of which form the river Makiang. Numerous difficulties by land and water are successfully got over, and she at length arrives at Siem Reap, the name given in the maps to the spot of which she is in quest.

Thérèse's account of Angkor-Wat is about the best thing in her book. The term Wat seems to signify a temple or pagoda. 'The edifice in solitary grandeur, seemed,' she says, 'more stupendous than any building I had ever seen in my life, though this may have been the effect of its rising suddenly out of the very heart of the great forest. I had not at all realised its magnificence in my continuous fight to get there. For a while I could not speak; my faculties seemed absorbed and overcome. But presently, as my eyes took in each separate beauty, the terrible need of sympathy came over me. Oh, for an individual who could understand my civilised tongue, that I might have uttered some exclamation of pleasure and delight!'

The building is in the form of a quadrangle, covering a square mile of ground. It comprehends four squares, one within another, rising towards the centre, with domes, cupolas, terraces, galleries, columns, pilasters, and gateways—the architecture abounding in thousands of figures of serpents, colossal lions, and other animals. In one of the galleries 'was a representation of a fight between men and monkeys, humorous and grotesque, and very significant of the Darwinian theory.' At the centre of the interior square, under a dome, and approached by steps, is the figure of Buddha. It is quadruple, of gigantic size, and expresses sleep or repose. Although more than two thousand years have elapsed since the figure was set up as an object of veneration, it is quite entire, and its thick coating of gold remains untarnished. All around was silent and deserted. The sentiment of awe in contemplating this typical representation of eternal peace was overpowering. For a description of the leading details of this marvellously grand temple, we must refer to the book itself. The building can hardly be called a ruin. It has simply been deserted and left unearned for, in some of the violent revolutions which, four or five centuries ago, altered the political and religious conditions of this part of Southern Asia. The only living things to be seen in the vast architectural solitude were bats of an immense size, clinging to the roofs, or fluttering overhead. Each was about as large as a cat, with wide leathery wings, sufficiently capacious to elasp a person round the neck, if inclined for mischief. They were beheld with fear and disgust.

Other edifices of a similarly mysterious character, but lesser in dimensions, were visited in the neighbourhood, the whole deserted, and existing as memorials of a former period of wealth and artistic grandeur, about which history is wholly silent. Whether they are of purely Buddhist origin, seems to be doubtful; for in their numerous emblematic figures, there are conspicuous traces of serpent-worship, an eastern superstition of great antiquity.

The next move of our heroine was to Singapore, an island lying at the southern extremity of the Malay Peninsula, and an important dépôt for British commerce. As everything was here too tame and thriving to yield a lively interest to the traveller, she set out one bright morning to cross the straits, fifteen miles wide, to the dominions of the Maharajah of Johore, the nearest point of the mainland. We take some interest in the reigning Maharajah, for though a Mohammedan prince, he is well educated, speaks English, and a few years ago, in making the tour of Great Britain, he visited Edinburgh, and we had the pleasure of giving him a drive round Arthur Seat. His kingdom of Johore is still in a sort of wild condition, with no want of tigers to keep the natives on the alert; but His Highness is busy setting things to rights, and is actually, under the auspices of Scottish engineers, setting on foot a costly railway, with a view to encourage commercial intercourse. Think of a railway at the southern extremity of Asia, perforating Mount Ophir, whence gifts of gold, precious gems, and ivory were brought to Solomon at Jerusalem, two thousand eight hundred years ago! Such is the case, and it is all for the best. The world cannot remain satisfied with traditions, however romantic.

Just as we should have expected, the Maharajah received Thérèse with princely politeness. It was not her intention, however, to put his hospitality to the test, but to learn something of the Jakoons, who inhabited the interior of his dominions. The ordinary notion is that the Jakoons are a species of monkey, who live in trees, but possess some of the attributes of humanity. According to the Maharajah, this is a mistake. The Jakoons were described by him as real human beings, without tails, who had a language of their own, and were susceptible of cultivation. No doubt, they had a fancy for living in trees, but they were harmless, and not disinclined to intercourse with strangers. With this amount of information, our authoress, after some travels here and there, sets out on an excursion to the mighty wild woods where the Jakoons have taken up their residence. For a lady, the journey was eccentric, but not personally dangerous. The country was not positively savage or unreclaimed. It had been visited by Portuguese and French missionaries, who had done what they could to introduce Christianity, along with the habits of civilisation. As a relic of these adventurous priests, there was an aged Frenchman, who still clung to his post, and, with indomitable perseverance, endeavoured to civilise the Jakoons. It was dreadfully up-hill work, trying to cultivate an ape-like people who dwelt in trees, and the poor man confessed that his only chance of doing good lay in catching and teaching the young. The visit to this devoted priest was vastly interesting. Now, in his outlandish quarters, he brightened up on being addressed in French; how he took pride in shewing off a school of thirty children, with copper-coloured skins, projecting jaws, and long toes, which they can make use of like fingers! It was diverting to hear these young Jakoons singing hymns in Malay and French, and going through the Gregorian Chant with surprising time and precision. 'A small harmonium was creditably played by a very projecting-ehinned gentleman. I could scarcely believe either my eyes or my ears, as I looked upon his jaw, projecting so far in advance of his eyes, that I wondered how he could see the keys of the instrument.' The church service was gone through decorously; 'only one little fellow amused himself by eating the wax of his long acolyte candle!'

Starting off through jungles and muddy paddy-fields, over hills and through ravines, under escort of the good-natured priest, Thérèse arrived at a Jakoon settlement, which could only be compared to huge crows' nests stuck about in the clefts of tall trees. Looking down from their lofty habitations, which are nothing more than a combination of twigs, the creatures regarded her with affrighted amazement; but the worthy pastor having signified that she was harmless, they began to open their wide mouths and grin a welcome. Invited by the inhabitants of one of the mansions, she managed to scramble up the tree. The dwelling was a mere platform of sticks—no walls, windows, or doors; no roof but the leaves overhead; and no furniture, except a few stones holding a heap of ashes, with cocoa-nut shells as cooking utensils, and a hollow bamboo, answering the purpose of a water-jug. Humanity could hardly be found anywhere in a more mean and primitive condition. The dress worn was of the most scanty description. Nevertheless, as we are

told, this poor Jakoon family 'were imbued with the spirit of hospitality. The youngsters clambered up the trees for cocoa-nuts like monkeys; indeed, in another establishment I visited, the child and the monkey stepped up in precisely the same way, and apparently with equal facility, not climbing as boys at home, but clasping the tree with the palms of the hands and feet, and so walking up on all-fours.' Each family seems to keep a monkey as a companion, as well as a help for pulling down cocoa-nuts; and we might say as a pig, for when his hour comes, he is killed and eaten. The boa-constrictor is also a favourite article of diet, and families will gorge on one of these massive reptiles for weeks together. Some enlarged information regarding the Jakoons, beyond what a lady at a random visit could be expected to pick up, would, we think, be very desirable.

We have not space to follow the authoress in her wanderings through the Indian Archipelago, or to accompany her to Ceylon on her way back to Europe. Enough has been said to induce our readers to peruse the work, which is in two volumes, and is so lively and original as to commend itself for more than a day's amusement. A number of the statements will afford matter for interesting consideration to the antiquary and ethnologist.

W. C.

NATURAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF HISTORY.

In past times, when books were scarce, and pictures, though called 'the books of the simple,' were still more inaccessible, our forefathers, curiously and cleverly, drew popular illustrations of history from nature. They found, here and there, among Nature's works, certain marks and features, which they applied to the embellishment of legends and facts familiar to their minds. As this sort of old-fashioned lip-love is not likely to be preserved unless some care is taken of it, we have strung a few of these natural symbols together, for the sake of their curiosity.

On the back of the haddock, near the head, are two round dark marks. These, dame and maid have whispered to each other through centuries of days, are tokens of those made by the finger and thumb of St Peter.—On the back of every ass there is a rude cross outlined by the intersection of a dark stripe with the ridge of the spine. The story is that the stripe is the mark left by a blow given by Balaam to his ass, and some people accordingly look on it with a degree of awe. The stripe is simply one of those natural marks, indicative that the animal is generically connected with the zebra.—On the breast of the robin is a red spot, contracted, first, at Calvary.—In the head of the lobster is a formation representing a lady or virgin seated in a chair.—In the head of the shrimp, among the antennæ, are two semi-transparent pale nude figures, bearing a striking resemblance to human beings. These are identified as Adam and Eve.—In men's throats, Eve and the apple are commemorated in the *Pomum Adamæ*.—On the stone of the date is a configuration in the form of the letter O, recording the exclamation of the Virgin in appreciation of the sweetness of the fruit.—In the flowers of the passion-flower are to be seen the implements of the Crucifixion.

In this way our forefathers gratified their homely

fancy. We still speak of the eyes of Argus in peacocks' tails, of Venus's fly-trap among flowers, of the sphinx among moths; and we have quite a recent, though faint, example in the comparison of the outline of Ben Lochan to the profile of the Duke of Wellington; but the awed kind of interest with which such things were discussed in the days of yore, and the mixture of poetical freedom and practical experience that sought them out, are gone for ever.

OLD LETTERS.

'Burn them wholesale! Ancient scars
Will bleed and throb if you delay.
Thrust them in between the bars,
Tied up in their packets'—Stay!
I see my mother's writing, and
My father's: ay, 'tis theirs indeed,
Though lettered in a large round hand
That their little son might read.
How I prized them! New to school,
How my very soul did ache!
Grief had killed a little fool,
If the heart could really break.'

'Olissold's writing! "Dear old boy,
Whatever happens, I'm your friend."
He meant it too: without alloy
Our friendship was, and feared no end.
How oft, while dropping down the stream,
Or idly stretched amongst the heather,
We shared in Youth's presumptuous dream,
And vowed to storm the world together.
O fool! to trust a boyish word;
O fool! to feel a boyish sorrow;
That Olissold, walking with a lord,
Would cut me, if we met, to-morrow.'

'Burn the letters! Ancient scars
Will bleed and throb if you delay.
Thrust them in between the bars,
Tied up in their packets'—Stay!
That hand so delicate and small,
Traced upon paper pinky white,
Does like a happy dream recall
A time of heavenly delight.
"My life! my love! (O tender girl!)
'Twill kill me if you are not true."
And here's a brown and silky curl,
Tied with the faithful colour, blue.
The honest silk has faded quite;
For would this only love of mine
Shed, if she saw me dead to-night,
A single tear for auld lang syne?'

'Burn them wholesale! Ancient scars
Will bleed and throb with this delay;
Thrust the letters through the bars,
Open not another'—Stay!
That foreign sheet I cannot burn;
'Tis Tom's last letter; give it me!
He writes in it of his return
To those—he ne'er again should see.
Burn it; burn all. For they who traced
The lines with such keen pleasure read,
Whose love can never be replaced,
Are false, are fickle, or are dead.
Burn them wholesale! Ancient scars
Will bleed afresh with each delay.
Thrust them in between the bars;
They belong to Yesterday.'

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.
Also sold by all Booksellers.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 511.

SATURDAY, MAY 9, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

A LITERARY ODDITY.

ONE occasionally, in the course of reading, comes upon some allusion to 'Taylor, the Water Poet,' about whom there is usually no very clear conception. When did he live, and who was he? These are questions we propose to answer. He was an oddity who, by dint of pushing and striving, and a certain degree of impudence, cut some figure as a versifier and pamphleteer, in the early part of the seventeenth century—a sort of hack-author, who entertained a considerable opinion of his own ability. Literature, however, was not his sole profession. Of a queer versatile genius, he could turn his hand to anything; and, properly speaking, he was a Jack-of-all-trades—a sailor, a waterman, a poet, a custom-house officer, a licensed victualler, a peripatetic bookseller, a traveller, a tuft-hunter, a schemer, and 'a firm Royalist with a lame leg!' Bating this trifling infirmity, the Water Poet was a personable man, with strongly marked features, a moustache, a bald head, and, when in full dress, a handsome starched ruff round his neck, overshadowing a single-breasted jerkin, with fashionably slashed sleeves—on the whole, a good specimen of the better class of hangers-on upon great men; such, for instance, as Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, who was one of his patrons.

Taylor was a useful man in his way. He would write for you an elegy, a sonnet, a satire, an anagram, or a treatise in prose full of biting invective. Such were his higher order of employments, which were carried on along with the more commonplace occupation of a waterman at Whitehall stairs. With his boat, he would scull you to Richmond or down to Gravesend, or if intent on dramatic amusement, take you diagonally across the river to the theatre at Bankside. His pursuit as a waterman was favourable to mental cultivation. Among beating-parties on the Thames, the practice of pouring out broadsides of jokes, jibes, and insolence had already become notorious, and the Water Poet, under such example, acquired a proficiency in the arts of sarcasm and repartee.

It is not quite ascertained how he began life.

Some allege that coming up as a lad from Gloucester to London in 'the Queen's time,' that is, the reign of Elizabeth, he was put apprentice to the craft of a waterman, and that, in the exigency of the Spanish war, he was pressed on board one of Her Majesty's ships. Others will have it, that he commenced his career as a sailor, and only after fighting in a few battles, and being discharged from 'the service,' he dropped naturally, as it were, into the waterman business. It is of no use wrangling with biographers over this point in his history. The main thing for us to know is, that when James I. by a lucky turn in affairs, left Holyrood for Whitehall, Taylor, with his wonderful aptitude for reverencing all who could promote his interests, stuck to the newly arrived royal family. It is likely enough that he adroitly took the king on his weak side, by writing fulsome poetical eulogiums on his wisdom. At all events, he ingratiated himself somehow with both king and queen, and was suffered to style himself 'The King's Majesties Water Poet, and Queen's Waterman.'

In Elizabeth's days, the craft of Thames watermen was in all its glory, and numbered many thousands of members. There was a choice of work, by entering as 'hands' in Her Majesty's ships, or by continuing to take chance on the river—salt or fresh water according to fancy. Things changed considerably under James. He disliked war, and for a quiet life was disposed to let foreign nations alone. Jobs at sea sunk to a nonentity. Returned sailors overcrowded the watermen's profession. As if to aggravate the misfortune, the players removed their performances from the Surrey side of the river to Middlesex, far remote from the Thames; and people no longer needed to take boats to enjoy theatrical amusements. Taylor, of course, considered this a great hardship, but no oratory or power of versification could prevent a general decline in the trade. It signified little. The Water Poet, with irrepressible vanity and combativeness, got into disputes with rival literary composers, and entertained the town with his vehement doggerel. Never letting an opportunity escape of turning the penny, and alike

ready for an elegy or epithalamium, the death of Prince Henry, eldest son of the king, proved a fortunate windfall. Out he came with the lugubrious poem, entitled, *Great Britains all in Blacke, for the incomparable loss of Henry, our late worthy Prince*, by John Taylor. It appeared in 1612. We may quote a few lines as a specimen of the way in which the Water Poet worked up his doleful lamentations:

Sighs, groans, and tears, assist my Muse to mourn
His death, whose life all virtue did adorn:
Whose aged wisdom, and whose youthful age
Was second unto none, that's wise or sage;
So old in sapience, so young, so grave,
To be transferred to his timeless grave:
Melpomene (thou sad'st among the Muses),
Possess my soul, and make mine eyes like sluices.

The lamentation probably paid as a literary adventure. Ere the tear was dry in his eye—if it ever was there—he plunged into satires and 'crudities,' which we have no space to analyse. Restless, and with the desire of gain, he went off on an excursion to Germany, which lasted three weeks, three days, and three hours, and was narrated by him in a pamphlet, as *Travels from London to Hamburgh, amongst Jews and Gentiles, with Descriptions of Towns and Towers, Castles and Citadels, Artificial Gallouses and Natural Hangmen*, 1617. The account of what he saw, though told in his pedantic style, is as picturesque as it is painful, for he does not spare the reader the most harrowing details regarding public executions and the levity of the onlookers. Of the morals of the people, he has a poor opinion. Acquiring a taste for travelling, he next undertook a pedestrian journey to Scotland. The account of this expedition may be called the Water Poet's principal production, and is more frequently referred to than any other of his works. It appeared as a volume in 1618. From an eccentric notion that he should trust entirely to the hospitality of strangers, he set off without money in his pocket, and actually made his way to and from the Highlands with a singular degree of comfort and satisfaction. We must go a little into this daring exploit. Proud of what he had accomplished, he, with pompous prolixity, entitles his narrative, *The Pennyless Pilgrimage, or the Money-lesse Perambulation of John Taylor, alias the King's Majesties Water Poet: How he travelled on foot from London to Edinburgh, in Scotland, not carrying any money to or fro, neither begging, borrowing, or asking meate, drinks, or lodging*.

The *Pennyless Pilgrimage* is a mixture of verse and prose. When the author is tired of rhyming, he takes to plain description, as more answerable for the purpose in hand. He commences in verse, with a jocose account of his equipment, setting out by way of Aldersgate, with a knapsack containing some provisions, and so

I stumbling forward, thus my jaunt began,
And went that night as far as Islington.

Alighting at the houses of friends, or of those who had heard of his writings, he is generally successful in securing good treatment. In the longer intervals of a day's journey, he sits down beside a hedge, opens his knapsack, and dines on bacon, bread, and cheese, with a drink of water from the neighbouring brook. He tells us it was against rule to accept donations of money. His expedition

was professedly to make trial of his friends. Over-taken one day by a horseman

Who knew me, and would have given me coin,
I said my bonds did from coin enjoin.

Boring his way in this haphazard style, he gets to Cumberland, somewhere about the 'Debateable Land,' into Scotland, which he is pleased to compliment:

'Twixt it and England, little odds I see;
They eat and live, and strong and able be;
So much in verse, and now I'll change my style;
And seriously I'll write in prose awhile.

In his prose we get some explanations which do not bear out his vaunted rejection of coin. He had by some means procured a horse, and sorning on friends was now of less avail. In Edinburgh, of which he gives some interesting particulars, he fell in with a strange gentleman, who lent him ten shillings; and at Leith, having accidentally met an acquaintance, 'a groom of His Majesties bed-chamber, he did replenish the vaunt of my empty purse, with two pieces of gold, each being in value worth eleven shillings white money.' The acceptance of these gifts is rather a downcome to the Water Poet. However, it must be said, he lived principally by his wits in procuring gratuitous subsistence. Nor was this, even with a horse, an insurmountable difficulty in the north. As in some sense considered to belong to the court, he was graciously received by sundry noblemen and gentlemen, who, after entertaining him for a day or two, handed him on from one to another. His account of what he saw of the people, and the condition of the country, is appreciated by modern authorities. Sir Walter Scott, in particular, acknowledges himself to be indebted to the Water Poet for his description of the Highlands, and method of hunting, called the *Tinchel*, which has furnished materials for the hunting scene in *Waverley*.

His entertainer in this memorable excursion to Brae Mar, in Aberdeenshire, was the Earl of Mar, who, at the time, had a number of distinguished guests, 'Lords, Knights, and Esquires, and their followers.' The aspect of the Highlanders was startling to the Water Poet; their flowing tartans, their hose held up by garters of hay or straw, the blue caps on their heads, and their broadswords, dirks, bows and arrows, targets, and Lochaber axes filling him with surprise. Riding in company with 'my good Lord of Mar,' he gets to the hunting-ground, at which, in a lodging, there were 'many kettles and pots boiling, and many spits turning and winding, with great variety of cheer: as vension baked, sodden, roast, and stewed beef and mutton, goats, kid, hares, fresh salmon, pigeons, hens, capons, chickens, partridges, moor-cocks, heath-cocks, capercaillies, and terragants [ptarmigans]; good ale, sack, white and claret, tent [or Alicante], with most potent Aquavita.' Such a delightful abundance had never before come within reach of the traveller, and was prized accordingly.

We are told that, reckoning native retainers and guests, there were 'fourteen or fifteen hundred men and horses.' The manner of hunting, he says, is this: 'Five or six hundred men do rise early in the morning, and disperse themselves divers ways, and [taking] seven, eight, or ten miles compass, they do bring or chase in the deer in many herds (two, three, or four hundred in a herd) to such or

such a place, as the noblemen shall appoint them; then, when day is come, the lords and gentlemen of their companies, do ride or go to the said places, sometimes wading up to their middles through bournes and rivers; and then, they being come to the place, do lie down on the ground, till those foresaid scouts, which are called the Tinchel, do bring down the deer: but as the proverb says of a bad cook, so these Tinchel-men do lick their own fingers; for besides their bows and arrows, which they carry with them, we can hear now and then a harquebuss or musket go off, which they do seldom discharge in vain; then, after we have stayed there three hours or thereabouts, we might perceive the deer appear on the hills all round about us (their heads making a show like a wood), which, being followed close by the Tinchel, are chased down into the valley where we lay; then all the valley on each side being waylaid with a hundred couple of strong Irish greyhounds, they are let loose as the occasion serves upon the herd of deer, so that with dogs, guns, arrows, dirks, and daggers, in the space of two hours, fourscore fat deer were slain, which after are disposed of, some one way, and some another, twenty and thirty miles, and more than enough left for us to make merry without at our rendezvous.' The Water Poet is so charmed with this rural sport, that he bursts into verse; the following being the conclusion of one of his enthusiastic sonnets:

Through heather, moss, 'mongst frogs, and bogs, and fogs,

'Mongst craggy cliffs, and thunder-battered hills,
Hares, hinds, bucks, roes, are chased by men and dogs,

Where two hours hunting fourscore fat deer kills
Lowland, your sports are low as is your seat;
The Highland games and minds, are high and great.

From Brae Mar, the traveller made a round among the noblemen's mansions in the more northern districts, returning by Moray and Forfar-shires to the south. Once more he visits Edinburgh, and takes occasion to again pay a visit to Leith. There, says he, 'I found my long approved friend Master Benjamin Jonson at one Master John Stuart's house: I thank him for his great kindness to me; for at my leave-taking he gave me a piece of gold of two-and-twenty shillings to drink his health in England.' The donor was the famous Ben Jonson, who had, in the summer of 1618, come to Scotland to visit the poet Drummond at Hawthornden. Helped, as we may suppose, by the gift—though always pretending he travelled without having recourse to money—Taylor went on his way by Berwick-on-Tweed, and without misadventure, reached London on the 15th October.

It was not alone from a wish to see the world that the Water Poet undertook his pilgrimage to Scotland. His main object appears to have been to make money by the account of his travels, which he hastened to publish by subscription; and we have little doubt that he was by no means modest in seeking out purchasers. The book was widely disposed of, but the author was disappointed as to getting payment. In a rage at the slow coming of cash, he, in 1619, issued a satirical poem, called by the droll name of *A Kicksey Winsey; or a Leery-come-Twang; wherein John Taylor hath suited eight hundred of his bad debtors that will not pay him for his returne of his Journey from Scotland.*

He lets easily off those who are presumedly unable to pay for his book; but on others who possessed the means, and would not pay, he pours a torrent of abuse, which probably furnished some public amusement.

A volume would be required to follow out his vagaries, one of which was a mad prank to go on a coasting voyage in a paper boat, aided by blown-up bladders, and which proved a failure. For years he continued firing off satires and pamphlets. His works altogether numbered a hundred and forty-one. To Charles I. he proved as great an adulator as to King James, and it would seem to some good purpose; for on the title-page of one of his sycophantish productions (1647), he styles himself a 'yeoman of His Majesties Guard.' Outliving Charles, the Commonwealth must have been a sore trial to his loyalty, besides causing the loss of his official position at court. However, he maintained his cheerfulness to the last. In his final shift for a livelihood, he died as a book-hawker and victualler at his house, the Poet's Head, in Phoenix Alley, Long Acre, 1653, at the age of seventy-three. Southey states that he was buried in St Paul's Churchyard; but Mr Charles Hindley, in his tasteful and laboriously edited works of the Water Poet (1872), has conclusively shewn that he was buried in the churchyard of St Martin-in-the-Fields. There, overlooking Charing Cross and Trafalgar Square, lies the eccentric author of *The Pennyless Pilgrimage*, one of the greatest oddities in the history of English literature. W. C.

A PERILOUS PASSAGE ACROSS THE ATLANTIC.

I AM going to try to describe my passage across the Atlantic, two winters ago, on board the steamship *Calabria*. The above-mentioned vessel is a fine Cunard liner of three thousand tons, and was under the command of Captain M'Micken, a gallant and experienced officer. It was a fine November afternoon when the *Calabria* swung from her moorings in North River, New York, and dropped slowly down the Hudson towards Sandy Hook, which we passed about eight in the evening. On getting over the bar, full steam was got up. The noble ship throbbed under the increased pressure of her engine, and steamed boldly out from land. The night was beautiful, though cold. All the passengers were on deck, taking a last glimpse of the lighthouse, which was fast disappearing in the darkness and the distance. Everybody predicted a favourable voyage. It certainly did look as if we were to have continued fine weather, for the barometer was high, and the sky clear. When I retired that night, the old *Calabria* was stretching herself out like a race-horse, and making fourteen knots an hour, steaming, for there was little or no wind, and we, of course, had no sail on. The barometer had fallen slightly, and the weather was getting a little thick. Our fellow-passengers were very agreeable people, and comprised specimens of nearly every nationality.

The next day, Friday, was a fine smooth day, with no wind to speak of, and we made a fine run of three hundred miles. On Saturday, the weather got very thick, and the barometer fell very low. The water still continued smooth, comparatively. There was every appearance of heavy weather. The passengers were beginning

to look 'down' a little, especially the sanguine ones. Some of the ladies were sea-sick, and there were numerous gaps in the company when it assembled for dinner. Saturday was a fresh fine day, with nothing of a sea or wind on. Sunday was very 'coarse' and squally, and rather a heavy sea on. There was service as usual in the saloon. Nobody seemed much impressed, for our attention was continually drawn off the sermon to ominous sounds which proceeded from among the crockery in the steward's pantry. I went to bed early in the evening, a little tired; but I wakened about eleven o'clock in an unpleasant state of undefinable apprehension. There seemed to be a great turmoil going on outside. The steamer was rolling almost on her beam-ends. I could hear the pattering of the sailors' feet on the deck close above me, for I was in the top berth. Every few seconds a sea would strike the ship, and make her tremble all over like a leaf; then it would rush over the deck with a 'swish,' or dash madly along her side, past the portholes, with a terrible noise. Now and then, a bigger wave than usual would fall clean on her deck with a heavy 'thud,' which would make the stout iron ship shiver like a frightened horse. I could hear the engine going unceasingly throb, throb, throb, and the telegraph on the bridge at work with its 'ting, ting,' shewing that our brave captain was watching over our safety. Altogether, it was the most dreadful and 'eerie' night I ever spent; for sleep was out of the question. After a long, long time, I rose, and after having been nearly brained in my attempt to put on my clothes, sallied out into the saloon. All were asleep, or in their cabins, and the saloon was in total darkness. There was a grand havoc going on among the plates and tumblers in the steward's pantry. I made my way forward to the engine-room, and looked down therein for a long time. It was certainly a solemn thing to look down on the immense masses of moving steel, lighted up by the sickly gleam of the swinging lamps, and to think over the wonderful devices of man for the ruling of the elements, of the power of these engines against combined wind and sea. To think that down in the dark recesses of the ship, there were men working for *my* safety. Above all, the solemn thought, what can a man, a mere worm do, if God be against him. 'No,' I said to myself; 'we are all in His hand; He is watching over us; without His consent not a hair from our heads can be injured.' I was much cheered by these thoughts; so I groped my way up the companion-ladder, having to hold on at every step, till I reached the top, where there were some seats round the head of the hatch. I sat down for a little, to gather courage to go out. After a while, I gently opened the door, and slid out, closing it rapidly after me. If I were to say I was astonished at the sight which met my eyes, I would be saying too little.

My breath almost left me as I looked around on the appalling scene. It was then about six in the morning, and almost light. The clouds, which were of a dull leaden colour, were flying like the wind, and so low, that they seemed almost to mingle with the sea, which was one mass of boiling foam. The waves were rolling in great masses, like mountains, one after another, the wind catching up immense volumes of spray, which actually

darkened the air. The seas rose in enormous hills up alongside the brave steamer, and burst over the decks. But the noise of the wind, how can I describe it! It seemed to my ears to have a *hungry* sound, as it roared and screamed through the rigging. The ship was in a miserable condition; not a boat left, not a bulwark. There were a few fragments of sail left flapping on the yards, and giving cracks like cannon-shots. The ends of the yards dipped into the water as she heeled heavily over almost on her beam-ends, and then pitched over on the other side. The captain was on the bridge; there were sailors placed at short intervals up from the bridge to the bows, where there was a look-out stationed, who gave warning when the wave was coming. It was appalling to see the terrible condition of the ship. The call of 'Starboard, starboard,' from the look-out was kept up till it reached the captain's ears, when ting, ting went the telegraph from the bridge to the steersmen, six in number, who were lashed in the wheel-house, up to the waist in water. The quartermasters let go the wheel, which whirled round like lightning, and the heavy steamer swings round to meet the mountain, which roars wildly over her bows, and rushes in a torrent down the deck. Every minute this scene was enacted about twice. To give some idea of the force of the wind, I must tell you there was a safety-valve on the steam-pipe, connected with the bridge by a rope, which was securely tied there. Every fresh squall of wind pressed the rope strongly enough to open the valve and let off the steam in a deafening roar. Still it required the united force of two strong men to let off the steam. The steamer was labouring so heavily that often she would throw her screw clean out of the water, and it would revolve like lightning, with a tremendous 'whir-r-r.' This, added to the noise of the wind through the rigging, the roar of the seas, and the ear-splitting scream of the steam-whistle, made up a babel of noises, the like of which I never heard before, and which I shall not forget till my dying day. All this time I was standing in the lee of the round-house, holding on to the railings like grim death. Occasionally I was drenched from head to foot by the waves, which were pouring over the decks by the tun. I managed to get down below. When I reached the saloon, I found numbers of the passengers gathered together in knots with white faces and looks of great terror. I was immediately assailed with anxious questions: 'Is it any better now?' 'Do you think there is much danger?' 'Did you ever see it as bad as this before?' &c. Of course, I could not answer their absurd questions, but said that I had never seen anything in the least degree approaching to it, although I had repeatedly crossed the Atlantic before, and seen plenty of 'rough' weather.

Towards the afternoon, the captain made his appearance for a few minutes in the saloon; he was besieged with eager questions. He said in his frank, sailor-like way: 'I have sailed the Atlantic man and boy for forty-three years, but I have never seen such a hurricane as this. It is ten to one if we ever see land again; I am expecting she will heave out her engines or smash her screw every minute.' So saying, he went on deck again, and we did not see him again for five whole days. Night and day did that brave and faithful man face the dreadful

hurricane alone, and in an exposed position, almost without food, and at times steering the steamer with his own hands. Many ludicrous things happened, but we were not exactly in the mood for enjoying them. At any other time, it would have been extremely laughable to watch the waiters bringing in the dishes for dinner. To see one standing with his back against the saloon door and bracing his legs firmly on the floor, then making a short run in the intervals between the rolls, sidling towards the table always: sometimes his charge would fly from his arms, and then the roll coming, he would be shot down the floor with a crash, and bring up against the bulkheads with a smashed plate, and perhaps a roast fowl or such-like reposing gently on the carpeted floor. I always felt inclined to sympathise with the poor fellows, instead of laughing at them, as I should certainly have done had the weather been finer.

The hurricane gradually grew worse and worse till Tuesday afternoon, when Captain M'Micken determined to lie to. In accomplishing this manoeuvre we were 'pooped;' that is, simply, a wave came thundering over our stern, smashing through the large saloon skylight, and deluging us with several tons of water, which poured in like a waterfall, and filled it knee-deep. At last, however, the captain wore the ship's head round to the wind, which eased the steamer perceptibly; in doing this, he said that before he could bring her head to the wind he had to make a circuit of five miles. In moderate weather, this might be accomplished in about a circuit of three-quarters of a mile. We lay to thus for thirty-six hours, when the wind moderating slightly, we turned, and pursued our way. To make a long story short—this hurricane lasted for five days without abating a bit. Nobody on board the *Calabria*, I believe, slept a wink all that time, and we were cooped up in the saloon, nobody being allowed up on deck, for fear of being swept away.

I did not go up again till Friday following. The weather was then very bad, a heavy gale blowing; but it was mere child's play in comparison to the five previous days. The *Calabria* was then steaming along very fast, to make up for lost time. We had lain to for a day and half, and, as a matter of course, drifted a long way off the Cunard track, therefore the hurry. The weather continued very stormy till the Thursday following, when we sighted land; then the gale commenced again, as if refreshed by its rest, and determined to make a last effort for our destruction. We passed what is called the 'Head of Kinsale' that afternoon. It was a grand sight to see the enormous waves following each in succession, and charging against the high cliffs with a noise like thunder. The spray rose in clouds over the top of the precipices, three hundred feet high, and flung itself inland on the green-sward. The Thursday night was very stormy, a heavy gale blowing, and a nasty, short chopping sea, which kept the *Calabria's* decks wet, and made her toss about like a nutshell. On the Friday night we arrived off the mouth of the Mersey. It was low-water, and a dense fog, so the captain wisely determined to lie to for the night. We were up on deck a long time with joy in our hearts, but it was blowing so hard and raining so dismally, that we turned in. All night we could hear our fog-whistle going, and the occasional 'whizz' of a rocket, which was sent up now and

then for a pilot. Nobody came; so the night passed off slowly and wearily. I awoke about seven next morning, and went on deck. We were steaming up the Mersey, abreast of Liverpool, in the gray dawn and a heavy drizzle of rain. The poor old *Calabria* was in a pitiable condition—no boats, no bulwarks, dripping decks; and her red funnel looked as if it had been whitewashed, from the incrustation of salt. We had not had dry decks for ten whole days. Captain M'Micken said that the only time he had ever seen an approach to such a hurricane and heavy sea was in the Bay of Biscay, the night the steamer *City of London* was lost.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER XXVI.—DARK, WITHOUT DAWN.

As bent to keep what she knew of her husband's secret, as resolved not to question him upon that portion of it which she knew not, Maggie was careful to let fall no hint to Mrs Morden of having been disturbed upon the previous night. The housekeeper's first remark, when she was told that John was ill, was: 'La! then Lucy was right, after all, when she woke me up with saying she was sure that somebody was moving about in the parlour. It was master, I suppose, after the brandy?' Maggie was about to assent, when she was saved from the exposure of her own deceit by the old woman's garrulousness.

'But dear-a-me, where are my wits gone to! I was thinking of the old master's time, when there was always a bottle of brandy in the cupboard. I forgot Master John was a teetotaler, and had bricked up the cellar.'

'Yes; but he was in the parlour, for all that,' observed Maggie quietly: 'he found he couldn't sleep, and so went down-stairs, and took up a book, to pass the time.'

'Ay, and so caught cold, I'll warrant,' exclaimed the old woman scornfully; 'a thing Mr Thurlie never did in all his life. That's what comes of studying, as you might say, out of hours. And now I daresay he's feverish; and if he gets low, as is like enough, and wants support, how is he to get it, having taken that foolish pledge?'

It was a habit of the old woman to complain of John, and to contrast him disadvantageously with his brother, and even with his late unele; but she had nevertheless a hearty respect and regard for her master, and was very urgent to be allowed to nurse him. Maggie, however, was resolute; nor could Mrs Morden advance the argument commonly used against young mistresses in such cases, that she knew nothing about sick-beds; her experience in tending her father gave her a stand-point from which she could not be pushed. So John lay in bed upstairs, while Maggie tidied the room and lit the fire with her own hands, and when she left him, heard the door locked behind her, and felt that he was safe from intrusion. There were 'alarms and excursions' from the kitchen, which gave her some apprehensions; once Mrs Morden came to her with a solemn face to confide to her what Lucy had hitherto forborne to tell, out of consideration for the trouble about Master; that she had found the front-door unlocked that morning, which she (Mrs Morden) would take her Bible oath she had securely

fastened the last thing before retiring for the night. This Maggie explained by saying that her husband in his restlessness during the small-hours had opened the door, to see what sort of weather it was, and had forgotten to turn the key. Another statement, which she found more difficult to meet, was, that the wood in the toolhouse had been meddled with; not diminished in bulk, so far as could be ascertained, but as it were restacked, and placed in a new position. As Mrs Morden, however, had no cognisance of this matter, and was jealous of 'that chit Lucy's' (as she called her) exclusive information upon any topic, she rather sided with her mistress in pooh-poohing this piece of news, and ascribing it to the girl's fancy. Upon the matter which Maggie expected every moment to be broached, and for which she would have had no sort of explanation, had it been so—as to some signs of excavation over the cellar at the back of the house—not one word was uttered; and after hours had passed without any mention of it, curiosity impelled her to go out and examine the spot. What she expected to find was either a great hole dug in the lawn, or traces of such having been recently filled in. But the turf was as smooth and clean thereabouts as elsewhere, and had evidently not been touched by the spade for months. This was a link in the chain of last night's mystery as inexplicable as all the rest; for that the sounds she had heard had been those of pick and spade, and that they had proceeded from beneath the parlour, where the cellar was situated, she had felt morally certain. This, however, was now proved to be a physical impossibility; nobody could have been breaking into the cellar at all; it was no thief with whom her husband had held that interview for so many hours; and yet, if no thief, what possible business could he have had at such a time within the grounds of Rosebank?

Above all, who was he? With every wish to respect her husband's secret, it was not in human nature to refrain from asking herself this question, and endeavouring to frame a reply to it. The appearance of the mysterious visitor, as seen from her window, had struck her as not wholly unfamiliar; but his voice, from what she could catch of its curt utterances, she could associate with no person of her acquaintance; while that hard cynical laugh of his, which still seemed to ring in her ears, had for certain pierced them last night for the first time. It was manifestly something this man had done, or said, or threatened, that had affected her husband in so strange and terrible a fashion; and if she could but identify him, perhaps her woman's wit could suggest some means by which his influence for evil could be averted, and the mischief be confined within its present limits. All day she racked her brains in vain; and then, as often happens to baffled memory, an undesigned remark of another gave her the key she sought. The evening was drawing in, and Maggie was congratulating herself on her day's work: the difficult task of disclosing her husband's illness, and yet of calming her father's fears upon his account, had been accomplished; with the housekeeper, she had succeeded even better, for, indeed, the good old dame had not been so importunate to nurse her master as she had expected—it would have been far different had he been her Master Richard; and above all, Maggie had dropped a hint to both that John's sleeplessness was ageing him in looks. In a day or two

she might give out that he was 'growing gray,' and so by degrees prepare them for the spectacle, the unexpectedness of which was its worst feature. For there was no ghastliness, nor even any striking incongruity, in what had happened to him; his comeliness, which had always been independent of youth, and, indeed, had had none of its vivacity and grace, was not impaired by the change of his brown locks to gray, any more than that of some women is impaired by powder in the hair. It was terrible to her, because of what had effected it, but it would not be so to those to whom it was accounted for by natural causes. Mrs Morden, too, had unconsciously given her great comfort. 'Ageing, you say, ma'am, is he, and with a grayish look? Well, that is not so strange, for I remember his uncle Thurlie, who was handsome, too, in his young days, though you might not have guessed it, grew gray quite rapidly, when he was not much older than Master John.'

'Then the change may not be my fancy, you think,' said Maggie, 'but that it really is so?'

'As like as not, ma'am,' continued the old dame, delighted to find for once her mistress so willing a listener: 'those sort of things run in the blood. Though, indeed, I could never fancy poor Master Richard growing gray, even when it was time he should be so.' Here she sighed, and wiped her eyes with the corner of her apron. 'I was quite upset this afternoon with the sight of one as brought the dear fellow to my mind, though in anything but a pleasant way, for who should I see, when I was coming back from the meat-market, walking along the High Street as bold as brass, and rigged out once more, so as those who didn't know him would have called him a gentleman, but that there Mr Dennis Blake! It was he, in my opinion—and in other people's too, who knew more about him—as was Master Richard's ruin; and now, I reckon he has been ruining somebody else, for a year ago he was little better than a beggar, and now again he's like a green bay-tree!'

Upon this text the old lady ran on for several minutes; but Maggie heard nothing of her improving discourse, nay, saw nothing but a slouching figure clothed in rags, following her husband through the midnight gloom into his own house, and whom she now recognised for the first time.

It was no wonder that her unassisted memory had failed to do so, for the link of association had been wanting: the very last person in all the world whom she could have expected to see in John Milbank's company—alone, too, and, as it seemed, upon confidential terms—was Dennis Blake. Yet that that was the man whom his own hands had admitted into the house, and with whom he had sat for hours in rapt converse, she had now no doubt.

Long after Mrs Morden had left her, she sat alone in the very room in which that strange interview had taken place, striving to picture it to herself—John at the table writing, and Blake standing or sitting near him, with his evil face and mocking laugh—and wondering what two such men could have in common. Depths of her nature were stirred, of the very existence of which she had been hitherto unconscious: prejudices, and even hates, were laid bare, which the waters of oblivion had long covered. For the first time since her marriage, she felt a vague mistrust of her husband's character: how could a good and honest man hold intercourse with so depraved and infamous

a wretch as he? nay, whom she more than suspected to be the murderer of Richard Milbank. She recalled to her recollection how John had defended this man when she had made that charge, and caused her to abandon it, and almost withdraw it even in thought: but it recurred to her now with terrific force. Suppose John knew that he had done the deed, and was shielding him!

She sprang from her chair, and swept her hair back from her burning forehead. Was she going mad, that such an idea could enter into her mind with respect to her own husband? a man so honest, good, and pure, that his virtues were resented by a wicked world, and positively rendered him unpopular: a man who had shewn himself, too, so excellent a brother to poor Richard, and who, for his sake—or for hers, it was no matter—had actually inflicted punishment in public upon this very Blake with his own hands. After such an occurrence, not to mention all the enmities between them that had gone before, and of which she had vaguely heard, friends they could never be; that was impossible; but they might be allies, bound to one another by some unhallowed league. Men of the most widely different characters, and who could never sympathise with one another, had yet been known to plot together for a common object.

But what could the object be in this case, and why should she be thinking of plots in connection with John Milbank, of all human creatures? Thus she stood, her mind tossed this way and that, now by wild suspicions, now by passionate self-reproach, and unable to arrive at any conclusion. People had pitied her for the dull sing-song life that she lived at Roschbank, albeit, as they owned, with 'The Best of Husbands'; but here was a mystery that had removed it far enough from the regions of commonplace. Suppose, too, the gossips should be wrong in the other particular—that is, as to John's goodness. But no; that was incredible, absolutely impossible with respect to him as a husband—for his devotion and tenderness had stood the test of years, and were undiminished; and incredible as regarded his general character. She would have dutiful trust in him still; she would hope that, somehow or other, in Heaven's good time, this dark cloud, though it could never be forgotten, might dissolve under some blessed beam of truth, which should shew him as pure as ever! But all the time a haunting voice grimly whispered that she was hoping against hope; that this mystery would never be discovered, or, if it were, would disclose some facts more terrible than suggestion could hint at. To escape from it, she fled upstairs. In the society of her husband, while she looked in his noble face, while she listened to his tender words, surely, surely she could entertain no doubts, no misgivings of him!

Somewhat to her surprise, she found that, although it was early (for he had been up during the day, and apparently occupying himself with business matters at a desk which she had extemporised for him), he had already retired to bed, and was lying with his face to the wall, and evidently inclined for silence, if not for slumber. This was a disappointment to her, since it denied her the moral support of which she stood in need; but with her usual acquiescence in his wishes—or in what she deemed to be so—she forbore to address him, and herself retired for the night. For some time, she lay awake, thought hurrying after thought, like sunless

clouds before the wind; but presently, overcome with the fatigues and anxieties of the last two nights, she fell into a deep sleep.

About midnight, as she learnt from the clock upon the stairs, she woke, but lay very still and quiet, partly for fear of disturbing her husband, if by chance his brain should have at last found repose—and partly because she felt this wakefulness was growing to be a habit with her, and not to be encouraged. Events might occur, to meet which she might require all her strength of mind and body, and sleeplessness was the weakener of both. So she lay with closed eyes, resolute not to move, and, if possible, not to think, yet with all her senses in a state of sharp and painful tension. At first, not a sound was to be heard—not even the breathing of her husband by her side, a circumstance which did not surprise her: if he were not asleep, he would now take no pains to pretend to be so, believing herself to be sunk in slumber; but presently she heard the muffled tread of feet in the room beneath. Always sensible, and slow to give way to fancy, she, for the moment, ascribed this to nervousness; she knew that her nerves were in a morbid state, and was disinclined to credit her own impressions; but after a while, she became convinced that her ears were not deceiving her. Then the idea which she had done her best to shut from her mind, rushed in, and took possession of it in an instant. These were the footsteps of Dennis Blake: he had come to-night, as he had come last night, and as he might continue to come, she knew not how long, to hold secret converse with her husband! She felt an anger in her breast that would not be stifled. She had given her word not to ask John questions about the previous interview; but that was when she was in ignorance of who had been his companion; if she had dreamt that it had been Dennis Blake, she would have insisted upon an explanation. Supposing, even, that he were innocent of the heinous crime of which she suspected him, still, since she *did* suspect him, and her husband knew it, how could he admit this man to their own roof-tree? She put aside the consideration of his offences against herself, although they were surely such as should have closed a husband's door against him, and rested her case upon the former ground alone. It was indecent—it was insulting to her own judgment, knowing her opinion of the man to be what it was, that John should suffer him within their doors. Upon the first occasion, it might be pardoned, since Blake had thrust himself within them—aided, doubtless, by powerful, though, to her, unknown forces, and quite unexpectedly; but nothing could excuse this second visit. She was a dutiful wife, but duty did not call upon her to submit to this; to harbour in the very house that had been Richard's home, the wretch she knew to have been accessory to his ruin, and suspected of being privy to his death!

The noise continued, and even louder than before, a shuffling and muffled noise, apparently of moving feet. It seemed to her as though the person below-stairs, having somehow gained admission to the house, was endeavouring to draw John's attention to the fact of his presence, without arousing any of the other inmates. But to attribute motives to sounds, is even easier than to attribute them to actions.

'John, John!' cried she, in such a tone as she had never addressed to him before, 'there is some

one moving in the parlour, and I believe it to be that hateful villain, Dennis Blake!

The die was cast—she had told him that she was in possession of half his secret; and notwithstanding her indignation, she felt some feeling of alarm at her own audacity, not for herself, but for fear of its consequences to him. He answered not a syllable. Had her words stricken him dumb? Had this fruit of the tree of knowledge, which she had plucked, brought death to him?

'John, John!' cried she again, but this time with nervous terror—'for Heaven's sake, speak!' But there was no reply. She reached forth her hand to seize his shoulder, but it only fell upon his vacant pillow. Her husband was not beside her: she was alone!

CHAPTER XXVII.—PARTING.

For the moment, the conviction that she was alone flashed upon Maggie with a sense of desertion: John had left her, and below-stairs was Dennis Blake!

Her mind was so occupied with suggestions and suspicions of this man, that every thought reverted to him; and it was not until after some reflection that the more natural explanation occurred to her, that the person moving in the parlour was John himself. What if the servants should be awake, and hear him, as she herself had done, and come down-stairs? In that case, all her precautions of the previous day would be thrown away! It was clearly her duty to warn him. Rising hastily, and wrapping her dressing-gown around her, she softly opened the door. His movements could still be heard, but, curiously enough, they were not so audible as when she was in her room. She went down stairs a little way, and then paused to listen. It was very dark, yet not so dark before her as behind her; a grayish glimmer, such as steals through windows even in a murky night, was before her, and shewed that the door of the parlour was open. If any one was there, she must, therefore, needs hear him, almost to his very breathing. And whoever was there must have heard her. The tick of the clock on the landing, the chirrup of a cricket in the kitchen, smote upon her straining ears, but no other sound. Then arose a shuffling, muffled noise—as of one who drags a burden behind him—from beneath her very feet: the person moving was in the cellar.

And here was a new mystery, for how could the cellar have been reached, since no one had dug into it from without the house, and the wall that had been bricked over the door shut it off from all within! The noise continued for a few moments, then grew fainter and fainter, and all was still again, save for the clock and the cricket. To go on without a lighted candle, was beyond Maggie's courage; but having returned to her room and procured one, she ventured to explore the parlour. It was empty, as she now expected it to be; and so were all the rooms on the basement floor. The front door was unfastened, so that it was certain her husband had left the house. She pushed back one of the bolts, a safeguard her terrors compelled her to take, and sat down to await his return. It was her purpose, when he did so, to demand an explanation of all that had happened during the last eight-and-forty hours. She felt that her powers were not equal to the task she had imposed upon them. Her

position in that house had become insupportable; she must speak, or she must die. Her past life, with the exception of her ill-starred passion for Richard, had been very uneventful; her lines had fallen on the broad road pursued by other persons in her condition, with undulations, but without great heights or depths; and her father, notwithstanding he was by nature reticent, had had no secrets from her. These circumstances of mystery, therefore, with which she now found herself surrounded, were the more insufferable and overwhelming. An hour had dragged its slow length along, and her solitary vigil still continued, every minute of which helped to fix her resolve to know the worst from her husband's lips. She had a right to know it, since the trouble that had changed him from young to old, was now consuming her. Suppose he should never come, but should disappear, as Richard had done before him! She felt that to lose her husband would have been endurable, but not to lose him thus, with his secret unrevealed. She was shocked to think that she could entertain such thoughts; but she was no longer mistress of herself and responsible for them. And still he came not. She once more unfastened the door, and looked forth into the wintry night: it was dark and windless, as the last two nights had been, and snow was falling, but it was not starless. There was one star, very low down in the sky, and this star was moving and coming towards her. It was a light borne by some one coming from the direction of the little wood, in which was the quarry. She had little doubt that this person was her husband; but an inextinguishable curiosity had taken possession of her, and conquered all her doubts and all her fears. She had closed the door of the parlour, and left the candle there, so that it was invisible from without, and she could watch, herself unseen. The light was drawing nearer, yet not immediately towards her, but in the direction of the toolhouse; that spot which had already excited the servants' superstitious terrors, and her own suspicions. With a sudden impulse, she sprang forward on to the lawn, and made for the moving light. Her footsteps could approach quite close to him who bore it, unperceived, if she could but reach him before he reached the gravel. Once she stumbled over a flower-bed, and once against a rose-tree, but her knowledge of the ground enabled her to move quickly enough to effect her object. She was able to recognise her husband, bearing, beside his lantern, a spade and pickaxe; his features she could not perceive, but he was plodding on, with head depressed, like one who is weary with toil. He crossed the path that lay between the lawn and the toolhouse, where she heard him throw down his burden; and then all was dark. He had extinguished the lantern, and was, doubtless, about to return within doors. Maggie flew back as swiftly as she had come, but, in her confusion, missed her way, and had but just time to reach the parlour before she heard him stealthily open the front-door. In the lobby, he stood for a few moments, apparently to satisfy himself that no one was stirring, for when he entered the room, he had not disencumbered himself of his hat and cloak.

At the sight of his wife standing up before him with her questioning face, white with cold and eagerness, he stopped, and stared.

'Why, Maggie, what is the meaning of this?'

'Nay, John, it is you who must answer me that question,' was her stern reply.

'You told me you would ask none of me.'

'That was as respected the doings of last night. It is not in human nature to be silent for ever, while such strange things are happening under one's roof.'

'They will happen no more, Maggie,' said he, with piteous entreaty. 'The worst *has* happened, and is over. Be content.'

Content! How was it possible for her to be so, with that spectre, wan and worn, before her; his gray hair only one item in the woful change that had befallen him, haggard, terror-stricken, exhausted, the mere shadow of the man he had been, even but yesterday!

'I am your wife, John, and I claim to know what takes you from my side in a night like this'—

'You are not jealous, Maggie, surely?' interrupted he, with a palsied smile, and grasping at the framework of the door in which he stood.

'Jealous! Yes, jealous of your secret; jealous of the villain whom you admitted here last night, and who has had the power to blast you, as the lightning blasts the tree, to blight the flower of manhood that you were, to *this*;' here she pointed at him with a disdainful finger. 'Tell me all. Though you are afraid of him, I am bold enough to meet a wretch like that, and to defy him to his face.'

'Have you seen him?' whispered her husband hoarsely. 'Has he told you anything?'

'He has told me nothing. I would not listen to him if he proposed to tell.'

'That's right,' returned the other, in the same low tone. 'He was ever incapable of truth, a liar born: remember that. Oh, if I had but killed him on that first day when he defiled your name with his base lips!'

'Killed him!' echoed Maggie, in horrified accents. Why had John finished that last sentence with such a look of unutterable despair? An old story cropped up in her mind, that had been sown there in her nursery days, about a man who, having resolved to kill another, had gone out with spade and pickaxe, just as her husband had done that very night, and dug his grave beforehand. 'If you have thought of killing him, it is no wonder you should look as you do, for you are a murderer in heart already, though the blood of your victim may not yet be upon your hands.'

'Upon my hands,' repeated her husband, looking at them mournfully, and with the same action that she had observed in him upon the previous night, and which she now identified with that of an actress whom she had seen years ago. Her father had taken her to the theatre as a child; a most unaccustomed treat, for play-going was looked upon by him in general with disfavour; but the scene recurred to her now, as though it had been yesterday, and even the woman's words: '*What, will these hands ne'er be clean?*' They smote upon her ear with the same dread significance with which they had smitten them then.

'I say, John, if you are thinking of murder, you have stained your soul with it, though not your hands. Do you suppose that any craft or subtlety of yours would hide it, if once committed? Or if ever you secured impunity from the law, that you would seem a guiltless man to *me*?' She spoke with uncommon fervour, for the idea which had

taken possession of her mind, was strangely strengthened and corroborated by her husband's shrinking form and ghastly face.

'I am no murderer,' gasped he, looking doggedly down.

'That is, not *yet*,' returned she impetuously. 'Or perhaps you think that killing a man—supposing you hate him enough, or that he deserves it in your eyes—is no murder! But I tell you, if you slay Dennis Blake, I will abjure you as though you had slain my father; nay, if he was to disappear, as your brother Richard has done, and none knew whither he had gone, I should credit you with having destroyed him; and if you owned to that, but pleaded that it was a fair fight, or that the blow that slew him was accidental, I would not believe you!'

'She would not believe me,' murmured John dejectedly.

'No; I would not. If you took a man's life at all, even though it was this man's, I would be your wife no longer. I should shrink from you as from some loathsome thing. I swear it!'

Perhaps she really felt what she said; perhaps she used such force and energy of speech to make him believe she meant it, and so to dissuade him from the crime which she was convinced he meditated. The effect of these words upon her husband was, however, prodigious, and far beyond anything on which she could have calculated: he staggered to a chair, and sat down, his eyes staring at her with mute despair, and his jaw sunk down upon his breast—the very image of remorseful woe and guilt.

'Oh!' cried she, 'is it possible that you have already killed him? John! John! do say that you have not done that. You have not surely dared to take his life, unjudged by man?'

'I have not,' he murmured.

'Thank God for that! Forgive me, husband, for having deemed you guilty of so base a crime.' She sprang towards him, in the fulness of her great relief, and would have clasped him to her breast; but he put out his hand, and stopped her.

'Do not touch me!' said he bitterly, and with averted face, 'or you will repent it.'

'Why should I, husband, since you tell me you are innocent?'

'What matters, if you will not believe me? If, for all I can say, or swear, I am still a loathsome thing?'

'I spoke in haste, John, and in fear. Oh, pardon me! I knew you never could have done so dark a deed. It was yourself, your face, your tones, that made me dream a ghastly dream; I have awakened now. Tell me but this, and I will ask no more, but shall be satisfied: What took you out to-night?'

'What took me out to-night?' he echoed, in hollow tones.

'Yes. Tell me the truth, as you have ever done. Hide nothing from me. Indeed, indeed, it will be best for us.'

He groaned, and shook his head.

'It will; I am sure it will! If I knew nothing, then, perhaps, I could bear your silence; but I do know something.'

'What is it that you know?'

'No matter. Tell me all, and then, from what I know, I shall judge whether you are telling me the truth.—No; I will not mistrust you, John,' added

she impetuously; 'I saw your lantern as you crossed the lawn, and followed you.'

'Followed me!' cried he, rising suddenly from his chair. 'O no; that is impossible.'

'I followed you, not out, but home, John. I went to meet you as you came from the wood; you had a pickaxe and a spade with you.'

He shuddered, and drew back from her towards the door. 'Well, what then?'

'I ask you to tell me why you had those tools, though I fear that I can guess.'

He answered nothing, but stood staring at her, and wetting his parched lips.

'Were they not to dig a grave with?'

He uttered a low piteous cry, and hid his face.

'It was meant for Dennis Blake,' continued she quietly. 'I know it. I have told your secret to yourself, since you would not tell it to me. The other way would have been the better, John. However, let us be thankful that your guilt has stopped at the intention. Do not reproach yourself so cruelly: the evil that this man has done to you must have been great indeed; and as it is, you have only wished him dead, as men wish their own brothers every day. When I said just now, that to do that, was to be a murderer, I knew not what I said; I spoke as women do in thoughtless passion: do not lay my bitter words to heart so.'

Once more she approached him, and would have taken his hand, but he snatched it from her.

'Touch me not!' he said; 'I tell you, I am not fit to touch!'

'But you have repented, surely; and repentance washes away sin, even in the eyes of Heaven; how much more, then, in sinful eyes like mine.'

'Repented!' murmured he, in a shuddering voice; 'yes, I have repented, but not enough!'

She judged from his wild words that he wished to be alone, that he might make his peace with Heaven.

'I will leave you, John, for a little; and when you see me next, you shall not be troubled by any questioning. From henceforth, mistrust is over. I will have firm faith in you till it shall be your pleasure to have faith in me.'

'Firm faith,' sighed he, looking at her with sorrowful pity: 'indeed, you will need it all. I had hopes, until to-night, that it might not be tried, but I was a fond fool to entertain them. Your own words have scattered them to the winds.'

'My words, John! How can that be?'

'No matter; you will learn soon enough,' was his strange rejoinder. 'You said that you would leave me for a little here alone. Do so!' Then, as she was about to quit the room: 'Good-bye, dear Maggie, good-bye.'

'Good-bye!' echoed she, surprised. 'Why, you are not going out again to-night?'

'No—no,' answered he, so slowly and so mournfully, that each monosyllable sounded like the muffled boom of a death-bell; his air, too, was so sombre and so hopeless, that a sudden conviction flashed upon her that he was contemplating suicide. 'You will not do a mischief to yourself, John, surely; promise me that.'

'How well she reads my thoughts,' murmured he, as though to himself: 'she must almost love me.'

'I do love you, John—not almost, but with all my heart! Is it possible that you could be so cruel as to wish to kill yourself, and leave me

desolate? You did—you do! I see it in your face! I will not leave this room, nor you, till I have your promise. Swear to me that you will never raise your hand, not only against another's life, but against your own.'

'That is a hard command,' answered he mournfully; 'you will know one day, how hard. Nevertheless, I will obey it. Fear not to leave me here, and find me dead. To live shall be a part of the punishment I have deserved for evil thoughts—not deeds, Maggie,' added he, with earnestness; 'upon my soul, not deeds.'

'I am sure of that, John,' answered she, assuringly; 'and even these thoughts, like some baleful fungus, that springs up in a single night, arose in you, I know, but yesterday. Pluck them from your bosom; pray for the stainless soul you once possessed, and I will pray that Heaven may make me worthy to be the wife of such a man.'

Before he could move, or prevent her, her quick step had reached him, and she had kissed his forehead, and passed swiftly from the room. His word once passed, she knew would never be broken, and she had no more fears as to his personal safety; but the fact that she had entertained them, and with justice, combined with the previous terrors and anxieties of the night, had shattered her nerves; she felt unequal to speak with him any further for the present, and longed for solitude, and time to collect her exhausted energies. On her part, she had promised to question him no more as to the mystery that hung about him, and had blanched his hair, and plunged his soul in gloom; but she could not help questioning herself. What could it be that had worked so potently for ill with him in a few hours, and set his innocent and noble nature upon schemes of murder and self-destruction? He had given them up, he said, and yet he had shrunk from her caress as though it had been pollution—not to him, but her. His haggard, hopeless face was before her still.

Was he standing where she had left him, or was he on his knees invoking pardon for the crimes he had meditated? He was speaking—doubtless outpouring his soul in prayer. What could it be that had driven so good a man to prayers like that? It seemed a sacrilege to listen. She got into bed, and the warmth was grateful to her shivering limbs. Her weary eyelids craved for rest, but she would not let them fall until John came up-stairs. What could she do to help him, not knowing what help he needed, nor against whom? Only, of one thing could she be certain, that danger menaced him, and she could also guess the quarter from which he looked for it. She would need all her faith in him, John had said; yet how should he suppose that anything Dennis Blake could say would weigh a feather's weight with her against her husband? What could Blake do, or what could any man, against one so armed from head to heel in honesty of purpose as was he?

John was stirring now below: he was at his desk, for she heard him use his key. What could he want there? He kept his Bible in it, for he was scrupulous to keep it hidden, like his own good deeds. Perhaps he was about to seek comfort from the sacred page.

'John, is that you?' There was a knock at the door, to which she had half-consciously replied.

'How is master this morning, ma'am?'

The day had begun to dawn, and Mrs Morden had come to call her. She must have fallen suddenly asleep before John came up-stairs.

'He is much the same,' answered she mechanically, but the words died away upon her tongue. Her husband was not by her side; for the second time she found herself alone. On the last occasion, it had been night, and now it was growing day; yet her alarm had been as nothing compared with her present terror. A conviction was borne in upon her, steadfast, as though it had been confirmed by a hundred tongues, that he had left her for ever!

STRANGE MARINE ANIMALS.

EVERY class of the great Animal Kingdom contains two or three species which, by the singularity of their structure and habits, are entitled to be numbered among the wonders of natural history; but there is perhaps no class which can boast of so many curious examples as that which comprehends the finny tribes of sea, lake, and river. Of these, there are none more remarkable than the so-called Musical Fishes of the East and West, the Blind Fishes of North America, and the Volcano Fish of the Andes.

If there is one common characteristic of all marine animals more marked than another, it is their absolute silence, or, to coin a new word, voicelessness. The one exception to this, and we believe it is only an apparent exception, is the Musical Fish. It is found along the southern portion of the coast of the United States; in the West Indies; and on the tropical coasts of South America; in the Bay of Bengal; in the muddy creeks on the shores of India; around Ceylon; and along the coasts and in the wide rivers of Burmah, and the great island of Borneo. These are the localities in which its existence is recorded, but it probably has even a wider range, and it is not unlikely that it is an inhabitant of all the sub-tropical seas. Its music is only heard at night, or in the evening after the sun has set; and particular spots, often of very limited extent, seem to be haunted by the fish, for on sailing away from them, the sound becomes inaudible, and, on returning, it is heard again. The accounts of it given by travellers agree as to the main features of the facts, but, as might be expected, they differ in some details. The sound always seems to come up from the surface of the water in long notes, low and clear, and perfectly distinct. Sir Emerson Tennent, who heard it in 1848 at Chilka Lake, an inlet of the sea on the east coast of Ceylon, describes it as 'like the gentle thrills of a musical chord, or the faint vibrations of a wine-glass when its rim is rubbed by a wet finger . . . not one sustained note, but a multitude of tiny sounds, each clear and distinct in itself, the sweetest treble mingling with the lowest bass.' Other and later visitors to the same spot have given a very similar account of their experience there. The fish seem, indeed, to abound off the Cingalese coast, and they have been met with out at sea in deep water at least a hundred miles from Colombo. This strange music has been heard, too, in the muddy creeks near Salsette and Bombay, and at Vizagapatam and along the Coromandel Coast. Other travellers record having listened to the Musical Fishes on a calm night among the islands of the Mergui Archipelago, off the Burmese

coast, and in fresh water in the Sarumoth River in Borneo. Of these, some say the sound was a prolonged note, rising and falling like the strains of an Æolian harp; others compare it to music borne on the wind from a distant shore; and with others, again, it was a droning, drowsy sound, all of one pitch, and seeming not only to rise from the water, but to fill all the calm air around. The accounts of travellers in America are to the same effect. M. de Thoron heard the sound in the Bay of Pailon in Ecuador, and in the river Matajé, and he compares it to that of a church-organ heard outside the door of a building, when the notes become mingled and indistinct. The fish, which is there called by the natives Siren or Musico, begins its song about sunset, and continues it through the night. The Rev. Charles Kingsley, who visited the caves of the Bacos Islands near Trinidad, where the Musical Fish abound, describes the 'song' as a simple drumming, or like the noise of a steamer letting off steam. This appears to be a correct description of the sound of the West Indian and North American varieties, for there the fish has received the unpoetical name of the Drum, the Drummer, or, worst of all, the Grunts. The varieties found in the Indian Ocean and Pacific are, however, capable of something more than this, and are well deserving of their title of Musical Fishes.

What fish it is that produces those sounds is, as yet, more than uncertain. It is indeed a question of some difficulty to determine. American naturalists are generally agreed that the Musical Fish of their eastern coasts, and of the West Indies, is a large fish, known to zoologists as the *Pogonias chromis*. It grows to a length of about five feet, and swims about in shoals. In its gullet there are three movable plates, covered with large teeth, and it is supposed that it is the action of these that produces the drumming sound. Of course, anything like a real voice would be an impossibility; but the least noise travels a great way under water, and would be heard distinctly by any one on its surface. The Cingalese at Chilka Lake told Sir Emerson Tennent that the singers there were shell-fish, and he himself inclined to the same opinion; but it appears to us very improbable that it is so. Other writers have suggested that the musician is a fish furnished with a sucking apparatus, by means of which it can attach itself to the bottom of a ship or boat, and that its musical instrument is the row of suckers on its head. There is, however, very little evidence to support this theory. The fact, that by applying the ear to the side of the boat, the volume of the sound is increased, proves nothing; for, of course, in any case, the timber, by its superior conducting power, would produce this effect; moreover, the music has been heard in places where no sucking-fish has ever been seen or caught. The fishermen at Salsette, near Bombay, attribute the power to a small fish very like the common perch; and those at the Bay of Pailon say that it is a white fish with bluish spots on the back, and about ten inches long, which they catch on the spot during the performance. The great difficulty is, that the mere hooking of a fish near the boat can afford very little information, for it might have been swimming near the surface, while the real performers were feeding quietly at the bottom. Our impression is, that there are, at least, two species of Musical Fish—one, the *Phogonias* of North

America and the West Indies, capable only of the monotonous drumming described by Professor Kingsley; the other, a species not yet determined, and possibly never yet captured. This Musical Fish, which has been heard alike in salt, brackish, and fresh water, probably, like so many others, ascends the rivers at certain periods to spawn. It is found both north and south of the equator in the Indian Ocean, and all through the Eastern Archipelago; doubtless, it exists also among the islands of the Pacific, and thus has an unbroken range from the shores of India to those of Ecuador.

Stranger still are the Blind Fishes of North America, which dwell all their lives in the utter darkness of subterranean rivers, where sight would be useless to them, and a beautiful development of the sense of touch therefore takes its place. In the central portion of the United States, there is a great tract of country which yields abundant supplies of coal, and underlying these coal-bearing strata there is a vast system of limestone rocks. These are traversed by hollow veins, fissures, and caves, through many of which flow underground streams, forming here and there miniature lakes. It is in these dark waters that the Blind Fish are found. In the great Mammoth Cave of Kentucky there are four species of these singular creatures. These are known as the *Amblyopsis* speleus*,† and its ally, the *Typhlichthys‡ subterraneus*, which are totally blind; and two other varieties, the *Chologaster cornutus*, and the *Chologaster Agassizii*, which are partially so. The *Amblyopsis* and *Typhlichthys* resemble each other very closely, the chief difference between them being, that the former is more than twice as long as the latter. The *Amblyopsis* is four or five inches in length, and perfectly white and colourless. The eyes are imperfect and sightless; indeed, they can only be found by removing the thick skin which covers and conceals them. But another sense performs their office: all over the head are minute papillæ or feelers, communicating by nerves with the brain; and so delicate are these new organs, that the slight movement of the water round them, as another fish swims by, is enough to indicate to the *Amblyopsis* how far distant it is, and in what direction; and it darts upon and seizes it as easily as a pike captures its prey in a sunlit river. The little *Chologasters* possess imperfect sight, indeed they have been found living in wet ditches in the fields of the Southern States; but in the caves it is useless to them, and the *Amblyopsis* feels for them in the dark, and hunts them down with perfect ease and certainty. Probably, there is in the whole range of natural history nothing more wonderful than this development of a new sense by the fishes of the Mammoth Cave.

Our third example, the Volcano Fish, is remarkable more on account of the circumstances in which it is sometimes found, than of any great peculiarity of structure. This fish is an inhabitant of some of the mountain lakes on the slopes of the Andes, in some instances as high as ten thousand feet above the level of the sea. It is known to the natives as the *Pregnadilla*, and zoologists have bestowed on it the name of *Arges Cycloptum*. The fish is small in size; the head is large and round, with prominent eyes and a long tentacle on either

side. From this the body tapers away to the tail, which is broad and forked. The dorsal fin extends along almost the entire length of the back, and the ventral and pectoral fins are large and well developed. In the lakes where it lives, it appears to be by no means numerous, and we would perhaps never have heard of it, but for its connection with the volcanic phenomena of the Andes.

In 1691, during the eruption of the volcano of Imbabura, thousands of *Pregnadillas* were thrown out by the mountain, and fell in showers in the streets of the town of Ibara, which stands at its base, and in the fields around. They accumulated in immense heaps, and putrefying under the tropical sun, spread a fever all through the district. A few years after, when, on the 19th of June 1698, the cone of Carguarizao fell in, fissures opened in the sides of the mountain, streams of mud and millions of fish came pouring out, and the same disastrous effect ensued. Again, on the 4th of February 1797, during the earthquake which destroyed Riobamba in Ecuador, chasms opened in the lower part of the volcano of Tunguragua, which overlooks the city, and emitted vast quantities of water and fetid mud. In some places the valleys were filled to the depth of hundreds of feet, and in the mud and water there were thousands of dead *Pregnadillas*. But the most remarkable instance on record is that of the eruption of Cotopaxi in 1803, which was witnessed and described by the illustrious Humboldt. On that occasion, the mountain threw out a shower of fish, some dead, and perfectly cold and raw, others half-boiled, and a good many alive and uninjured, notwithstanding their fiery flight from the loftiest crater in the world.

Writers on the subject have tried in vain to fully account for these strange occurrences. One thing is evident—that the chief abodes of the *Pregnadillas* are not the open lakes, but subterranean waters, perhaps communicating with them, but hidden away within the Andes. Here they dwell in countless numbers in dark obscurity, until the volcanic force working out for itself a new path through the mountain, or the earthquake cleaving its sides asunder, breaks into their retreats, and pours them out on the surrounding valleys.

DENNY'S INTENTIONS.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

THERE was a little difficulty about Charlie Blake's appointment at the African coast, after all. He had imagined that he would be engaged with alacrity, like a volunteer for a forlorn-hope; but he found that there were half-a-dozen applicants for the place, and almost as much fuss in filling it up as if it had been a bishopric. Mrs Markham had, however, privately assured Mary Blake that she would take care that Charlie had the preference. Mary had written to Fanny, some time ago, telling her that Charlie was going to the Gold Coast, and colouring his prospects with the hues of hope; and she had received a note from Fanny since, saying she was sorry Charlie was going away, and begging him to accept her warmest wishes for his welfare, and so on.

Mary and her brother were sitting at tea one evening talking over the future, and the few days that they would have to spend together, when they

* From Greek *amblys*, dull, and *opsis*, sight.

† From Greek *spelaios*, cave-dwelling.

‡ From Greek *typhlos*, blind, and *ichthys*, a fish.

heard a vigorous florid double-knock at the door, and the mistress of the house came and announced that a gentleman of the name of Hutton wished to see Mr and Miss Blake.

Mary coloured brightly; the thought at once came into her mind, it was Tom. Charlie was struck with a sudden thrill of hope and excitement: Denny was dead, and had made him his heir, and Hutton had come to tell him the news.

It wasn't Tom Hutton, but the old gentleman, as he was beginning now to be called.—He'd no particular news, he said, but he was in the neighbourhood, having a little business at Manchester, and he thought he'd come over and see them. Yes; he'd have some tea, but nothing substantial, as he had only just dined. And how was Charlie getting on? Pooh! he mustn't be down-hearted. A young man, steady and of good abilities, was sure to get on in time; but it wanted time. There were many inquiries after them at Silverbridge. Mr Denny was constantly asking after Charlie. Gold Coast? Going to the Gold Coast? Nonsense. It was madness for a young fellow like Charlie, and with his prospects, to fling away his life, or at all events his health, in a pestiferous place like that. If, indeed, he had a chance of making a fortune in a few years, and coming home to spend it, then it might be worth while to encounter the risk; but for a salary, and a small one—oh! it wouldn't do at all.

'That's all very well, Mr Hutton,' quoth Charlie; 'but what am I to do? I have been trying for the last six months to get something, and have failed. It's a sort of happy despatch, I know, but anything's better than this: give me bread and cheese at home, and I'll stop there.'

'Well,' said Hutton, 'come, Charlie; I'll give you a berth. I can't offer you very much, for you know nothing about law, and you wouldn't be much use to me at first. But I'll give you seventy-five pounds a year, and you can go on with that till you get something better. That's bread and cheese for you. And you'll be on the spot to look after old Denny, and see that he keeps you in mind.'

Charlie and his sister talked the matter over till late that night, and came to the resolution that it would be better to accept Hutton's offer, and throw up the African business. Next morning came a note from Fanny to Mary, begging her to use her influence with Charlie to make him give up the Gold Coast. Charlie had many well-wishers at Silverbridge, and things would be sure to turn out well, if he didn't give way to despair. She knew her papa was going to make him an offer, and he would be wise to take it. And if Mary Blake would come and live with her brother at Silverbridge, it would be 'awfully jolly; and the good old times would come back again. And with a view to effect such a desirable consummation, she had been making certain inquiries. Mrs Holbrook of the Grange, whose daughters were now growing up, wanted a non-resident governess to take the management of their studies. She would be only too glad to have 'Miss Blake.' Seventy pounds a year. And there is a set of three charming little rooms at the post-office in the village, close to the Grange, and a mile from Silverbridge; the curate and his sister used to lodge there. 'I've pretty nearly settled it all,' wrote Miss Hutton; 'and if you disavow me now, I shall be having all kinds of actions for damages brought against me. So you must come.'

It was really very nice to be the subject of all this good-will. And now, with Charlie's seventy-five pounds a year, and Mary's seventy, and the fifty that they had of their own, they would enjoy a very comfortable income. It was a tame-cat kind of a life, it was true, Charlie thought; but it was worth a good deal to be within reach of Fanny Hutton.

After all, it is not a good thing to go back anywhere. Disappointment follows every attempt to put back the clock, to revive old associations, to live over again the past time. Silverbridge had been such a bright little place in their memories of it. Now it seemed small, and dull and sleepy. Most of their old friends had died, or otherwise disposed of themselves; the few that were left seemed rather aggrieved than pleased to see them again. That was their first impression. Afterwards, when they made up their mind to abjure reminiscences, and to treat the place as it was, a comfortable, but rather priggish country town, they got on very well.

The Huttons had waxed in importance and position since those old days. Old Campion, the banker, Mr Hutton's uncle, was dead, and had left him a share in the bank; and the old house in the corner of the High Street was now all offices, and the Huttons lived in a very nice country place, the Limes, about two miles away from the town. They rather looked down upon the old friendly society of the town now. They gave great dinner-parties, and considered themselves to belong to the county. Tom hunted in pink, and Fanny was the belle of the county balls, and the great authority in all kinds of amusements. She wasn't a bit changed in other respects. She was just as bright and unaffected as ever—still delighted in her friendship with Mary, was still as glad to talk and laugh with Charlie; but she was full of business—of the business of pleasure—always on the wing; as full as ever of dangerous fascination for Charlie.

As soon as the Blakes had settled in their new abode, Charlie went off to pay his respects to old Denny. The Manor farm had an old-fashioned house of stone, with mullioned windows and three gables. There was a grass plot in front, that formed a run for the poultry; and a paved foot-way led through it to the hall-door. This opened into a cool, brick-paved hall, containing an old-fashioned bureau, a broken weather-glass, a row of deal pegs, on which were hanging three white beaver-hats, in various stages of decay, the pony-harness, and old Denny's whip. A passage to the right, at the further corner of the hall, led to the sitting-room which Denny always used—a scantily furnished room, but always cool in summer, with an undescribable country fragrance about it, not unpleasant.

He had changed very little during the past fifteen years. Drier, sharper, harder-looking than ever; a little bent now, and his hand shook as he held it out to Charlie; but there was plenty of life in the old man yet. Charlie caught himself appraising critically his looks, and noting the signs of wear and decay. Suppose that it was, as everybody hinted to him, that Denny had never altered his will since he had made him his heir, what a wonderful change any little accident to the old fellow might bring about! Mr Denny scanned the appearance of Charlie with an equally critical eye.

'Well, so you've come back, like a bad penny,

hey? Glad to see you, my boy, and looking so well too. You really are well—quite strong and hearty. Yes, yes; I see you are taking after your grandfather, as I hoped, and not after your poor father. Not but what he'd have been a long-lived man too, if he hadn't taken to the painting business. But your grandfather—there was a wonderful man! ninety-seven when he died, and every tooth sound in his head when he was eighty! And you take after him.'

'I don't care about getting to be an old man,' said Charlie; 'a short life, and a merry one, for me.'

'But tish, tish! my boy; that's very wrong; that's sinful; that's going against the Bible and everything. Health is the greatest blessing of all—health, and a long life. Never you neglect your health, my boy. Why, you were talking of going to Africa; it gave me quite a shock when I heard it.'

'Why should you care anything about it, Mr Denny? Nobody else did.'

'Ah, ah!' said the old man, his eyes twinkling; 'I daresay you'd like to know. Come, come! that would be telling. Time will shew, my boy; time will shew. You keep yourself strong and well, my boy, and take plenty of exercise, and don't let that fellow Hutton work you too much. If he does, and you feel getting poorly, come and tell me; do you hear? Now, we must have something to drink on the strength of this. What shall it be?—a glass of beer, eh?'

Charlie shuddered, remembering what Denny's sour ale used to be like.

'Come, we'll have something better than that,' cried the old man, getting up from his chair; and going to a sort of locker or cupboard in the thickness of the wall, he took out a black bottle and a couple of old-fashioned wine-glasses, holding about a thimbleful each. 'It doesn't do to take it every day,' cried Denny, 'but once in a way, once in a way. It's very strong, Charlie—very strong; it'll make you cough, I daresay. We won't have a whole glassful, but up to the cut—up to the cut, as Parson Goldthorp used to say. Ah, there was a fine man; lived to be ninety-one, and might have been a hundred, if he hadn't broken his leg in kicking a parishioner down-stairs. One of the good old school, Charlie, like the old bishop.'

'He's dead, too, isn't he?'

'He's dead, poor man; yes, he's dead—more's the pity! A fine old man, too, and would have lived ten years longer if they'd let him alone. Come, I'll give you a toast.—What! you've drunk your liquor already! My boy, my boy, that's extravagant. Stop; I'll give you a tiny little drop more, to drink my toast—Long life to us both! Long life to us both!'

'Here's long life to you, Mr Denny! As for myself, I'm content to take my chance.'

'Oh, my boy, my boy, you mustn't talk in that reckless way. Take care of yourself, my dear Charlie, for, if anything were to happen to you, I think it would kill me.'

Mr Denny spoke with such fervour that Charlie was a little touched. What could have induced the old fellow to have taken such a fancy to him? These things were unaccountable. At all events it was a very capital thing for him, for after the hints Denny had given, it seemed hardly possible

to doubt that he had remembered him handsomely in his will.

When he went away, Denny repeated his expressions of good-will, and told Charlie, if ever he felt the least weariness, or depression, to come down to the Manor farm, and get set right again. Charlie thanked his friend for the offer, but hadn't much faith in the remedy. Half an hour at the Limes with Fanny Hatton, would be worth a whole week at the Manor farm in recuperative power.

Charlie's position at the office was not a very comfortable one. He felt himself that he wasn't of much use, and nobody took any pains to put him in the way of being so. The other clerks looked upon him as an interloper and intruder. The managing clerk treated him with elaborate, somewhat sarcastic politeness. If Charlie asked him a question, he would reply that he didn't know what Mr Hutton's views were, and that he would be obliged if he would speak to him on the matter. Fanny, too, often came sweeping into the office. There was a picnic up the river, or a croquet party at the Limes, and Charlie was to come. 'I've made it all right with papa,' she'd cry to Marrables, the managing clerk, who would look astonished from his desk, and rub his nose in perplexity. Charlie was good at all kinds of games; he had a natural talent for acquiring anything that couldn't possibly be of any use to him, and was in great demand, in consequence. At the time, he would be delighted to be called away from copying that dismal tautological deed in which he was always beginning at the wrong 'whereas,' spoiling a new skin, and having to start again; but after-reflection told him that all this pleasure was of a very baseless kind.

One fine summer day, the chimes were tinkling drowsily in the sultry air, the High Street of Silverbridge seemed a glaring desert of white hot road, and whiter hotter stones; nothing was stirring except the stout policeman, who stood under the scanty shade of the confectioner's awning, his helmet in his hand, mopping his forehead with a cotton handkerchief; and the railway bus, that was descending to meet the 12.30 train, accompanied by a swarm of pertinacious flies. It was high noon, and an off-day in the town; work was rather slack, even at Mr Hutton's office. Mr Marrables had just sent out for twopenn'orth of sherbet, which he was about to mix in the office tumbler with the office paper-knife—in this oriental weather, oriental luxuries were not inappropriate—when Mr Denny's pony-chair stopped at the corner of the High Street, and the owner dismounted and walked into Mr Hutton's office.

'Well, Mr Denny,' said Marrables affably, 'how does this hot weather suit you?'

'Pretty middling, pretty middling.—Where's Master Blake? Is he within?'

'Oh,' said Marrables with a sniff, 'picnicking as usual. Miss Fanny came and fetched him off. It's well to be him, Mr Denny.'

'What! is he often going out, then, with Miss Fanny?'

'Oh, it isn't my place to say anything about what goes on, you know, Mr Denny; and, indeed, why shouldn't he go out with Miss Fanny, if everything they say is true. He will prove a very good match for her, and needn't trouble himself to do any work for his living.'

'What! has he come into a fortune, then?'

'Not yet, Mr Denny; but they do say he's looking out for somebody's shoes. Well, if he don't know how to make the money, he'll know how to spend it.'

'Oh! I didn't know he'd any expectations,' said Denny, looking cold and blank.

'Well, Mr Denny, then you are the only person as hasn't heard of it: he's trumpeting about it all over the place. Charles Blake, Esq. Manor farm; why, it's written all over the blotting-paper. Look here, Mr Denny.'

Denny came up to the desk, and looked at the blotting-pad—it wasn't Charlie's, by the way; but that didn't matter—sure enough, there was Chas. Blake, Esq. Manor, Chas. Blake, Manor House, scribbled all over it.

'Oh, he's trumpeting it about, is he, Mr Marrables?'

'So everybody tells me. I don't pay any attention to what he talks about, myself.'

'There's such a thing as blowing the wrong end of the trumpet, Marrables, and them as does sings small. Come, where's Hutton? I want to speak with him directly.'

Mr Denny was closeted some time with Mr Hutton. When he had gone, Hutton came out and spoke to his managing elerk.

'Where's young Blake?' he asked, with some asperity in his voice.

'I think he's gone to a picnic, Mr Hutton.'

'Oh! Is there nothing for him to do, then?'

'Yes, sir; there's plenty, if we could only get him to do it.'

'Um! Did you give him leave to go?'

'Oh, dear me, no, sir! The young gentleman never thinks of asking my leave about anything.'

'Well, in future, see that he does.'

'Yes, sir. I beg your pardon, but you see it is very awkward for me to interfere, when Miss Fanny comes and fetches him away.'

'What! did Fanny come for him? Very well, Marrables, I'll put a stop to all this. Send him in to me when he comes in.'

Charlie didn't, however, return before the office closed, and Hutton went home to the Limes in a very bad humour. What he saw there, didn't tend to restore his equanimity.

The picnic up the river had turned out in some respects a failure. Miss Hutton had expected a large party to join them a few miles up the river, but the weather in the morning had been threatening, and the expedition was abandoned. Fanny and her brother had paddled up in canoes to the rendezvous, whilst Charlie had pulled up with his sister in a light outrigger skiff. The other people were to have found provisions, whilst the contribution of the Huttons was a hamper of wine. The wine was there, but nothing to eat with it; and after waiting some time in vain for their friends, Fanny proposed that they should change their plans, and have an afternoon's croquet and 'high tea' on the lawn at the Limes. They could take the light cart in which the hamper had been brought from the house, and drive home, whilst the servant pulled the boats down the river. This was a very capital arrangement, everybody thought. Tom drove, and Mary sat beside him, whilst Charlie and Fanny stowed themselves at the back on the top of the wine-hamper. They were very merry and happy, driving along sunken sandy laies,

where the elms formed green aisles, flecked with golden sunlight. The horse was young and fresh, and Tom was rather a reckless driver, and, perhaps, instead of having his eyes on his horse's head, he had them on somebody else's face; anyhow, something scared the horse—a boy sitting on a stile, or a wheelbarrow with a spade in it—and he swerved, spun violently round, and galloped off in the opposite direction, the wheel of the trap going over a thick root stub. Tom stuck to his seat, and Mary stuck to Tom; but the other two were whirled violently off. Charlie landed in an ant's nest on the bank, and Fanny in the ditch, among a heavy crop of nettles.

Charlie was up in a moment, and didn't feel the bites of the pugnacious red ants, who attacked him furiously; for there was Fanny stretched, pale, and apparently lifeless, in her couch of nettles. He sprang to her side, and drew her gently to the turf at the side of the road; he chafed her hands, he rubbed her temples, he tore open the band of her dress to give her air. She came to then, and blushed rosy red.

'What are you doing, Charlie?' she said.

'What's the matter?'

'A spill, that's all. I thought you were dead.'

'Well, you might have laid me out comfortably, at all events,' said Fanny, sitting up, leaning on her elbow.

'Thank Heaven, Fanny, you're all right,' said Charlie, heaving a great sigh of relief.

'Where's the hamper, and where are Tom and Polly?'

'Oh, I daresay they're all right. But you, Fanny, are you quite sure you're not hurt anywhere? Oh, you don't know the agony of the moment, when I thought you were killed!'

'Did you think I was killed? Poor Charlie, you wouldn't have cared, after the first minute.'

'My dear, I should have killed myself. Fanny, you can't realise how, in a moment, the thought of all you were to me burst upon me as I saw you lying senseless.'

'A nice way you have, Charlie, of helping one to get one's wits together. Don't bother me now, but help me up.'

She sprang to her feet readily enough; and they hadn't walked more than a few paces, before they heard the dog-cart rattling up behind them. Mary jumped out as soon as it stopped, and threw her arms round Charlie, and burst into tears. Tom looked on sympathisingly. Fanny rapped with her foot upon a stone.

'There, that'll do, Polly,' she said; 'why don't you come and cry over me? Come, I vote we three walk quietly home; it's not more than a quarter of a mile now; and Tom may break his own neck if he likes with that wild little horse of his.'

They didn't say anything about this little mishap when they got to the Limes, but set to work playing croquet. Tea was brought to them on the lawn; and after that, as they were tired of croquet, they roamed about among the shrubberies. Charlie had just said enough to Fanny to make him determined to say more; and after a little manœuvring, he contrived to find himself alone with her in a rustic summer-house at the end of one of the walks; and then he told her that he loved her, sincerely, devotedly. Fanny didn't seem much surprised.

'Yes, it's all very well, Charlie,' she said; 'I like you very well, as much, perhaps, as you do

me; but what's the use of it? We can't live on air.'

'But, Fanny,' said Charlie, 'if you would give me a little hope, perhaps—indeed, I know I should have motive enough to make me win my way in the world. As your papa says, one must have a motive.'

'It's a long process, Charlie; we should be both of us gray before it was finished. And how would you set to work to begin?'

Charlie couldn't exactly say at that moment, but he would find a way somehow.

'Then, when you make a start, Charlie, you may come and ask me again: that's fair, isn't it?'

'O Fanny, you don't know what life you have put into me, with thus much hope'—

'Master Blake, Master Blake!' cried a voice from the shrubbery. Charlie turned round, and saw Mr Hutton standing there, looking at them with no favourable eyes.

'Fanny,' he said, coming forward, 'your mother wants to see you in the drawing-room.—Blake, I want to speak to you.'

Mr Hutton walked inside the summer-house, and sat down in the carved oak-chair that stood against the inner wall, quite in the shadow, so that nothing of him was to be seen in the declining light but his face and white broad shirt-front.

Charlie stood by the door, leaning against a rustic pillar that supported the thatched roof. He felt as if he were on his trial, and Hutton were the judge.

'Well, Master Blake,' began Hutton, 'do you call it a proper return for the kindness I have shewn you, to betray my confidence, and try to ingratiate yourself with my daughter—eh, sir?'

Charlie shrugged his shoulders. 'I didn't know that, when I entered your service, I undertook to efface all natural affections. My attachment to your daughter didn't begin to-day or yesterday. I don't think she can have been altogether ignorant of it, or you either, for that matter. But I didn't intend to say anything about it at present, till accident opened my lips.'

'Do you call it the conduct of a gentleman coming into my employment, and visiting at my house, to make love to my daughter?'

Mr Hutton was trying to work himself into anger. He felt he was as much to blame as Charlie, but he wasn't going to own it.

'I can't see that I'm to blame in any way,' said Charlie, 'except, that perhaps I ought to have spoken to you sooner. However, I'll repair my error as well as I can. I love your daughter, Mr Hutton, and I request your permission to pay my addresses to her.'

'Ha! that's very fine,' snorted Hutton. 'And, pray, what do you propose to keep my daughter on? Eh, what are your means, my good fellow? I suppose you expect me to maintain you both in idleness; but you're mistaken.'

'I admit,' said Charlie, 'that my means are not ample at present.'

'Ample! Why, you're a beggar, my dear fellow, a pauper'—

Charlie went on, ignoring Mr Hutton's offensive language. 'You know better than I do what my prospects are. I don't like to speculate on uncertainties, but I think from hints that you've dropped, and your general attitude to me, that you imagined—that you thought, in fact, that I had expectations.'

'I suppose you mean from your friend Denny?'

'Well, yes.'

'Why, man,' cried Hutton, almost in a scream, 'you'll never get sixpence from him; he told me so this very day!'

Charlie gasped and shivered in astonishment and dismay. He had never realised till now how much this air-built castle of his had taken hold of his imagination, how he had cherished it in secret as a panacea for all the ills of life. Now he found that all his days he had been nursing a silly empty delusion, but he wouldn't believe it. Hutton was angry, and talking wildly.

'It may be as you say,' began Charlie. 'I have never built upon old Denny's inheritance, but certainly he has always given me to understand that he took a great interest in my welfare; and he has often enough hinted to me that I might expect something handsome at his death. Why should he befool me so, if he meant nothing?'

'I'll tell you, Charlie Blake,' said Hutton more gently; he had a liking for the youth himself, and felt a little remorse at the part he had played. 'Old Denny has hoodwinked me as well as you. It was certainly at his suggestion that I offered you the berth in my office, and I quite understood from Denny that he took a personal interest in your welfare, and had a design to make you his heir.'

'And what has caused the change?' said Charlie thickly.

'It seems that this was the old fellow's cunning to get you put off your African expedition. He has a very serious interest in your life—in this way.'

'Well?' said Charlie, bending eagerly forward.

'You know, Blake, that the Manor farm he now holds is a very valuable one; it would let for a thousand a year at least.'

'Yes, I know,' said Charlie.

'And it belongs to the see of Bincaster, and Denny has it on a lease.'

'Well, what of that?'

'This lease, in the time of the old bishops, was always by ancient custom renewed on payment of a small fixed fine.'

'What has that to do with me?'

'When the old bishop died,' Hutton went on tranquilly; he had almost got into a good temper again, and he delighted in a lucid description—'when the old bishop died, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners took the management of the whole estates into their own hands, paying the present bishop a fixed salary.'

LIGHT AND SHADOW.

LIFE is not all one shadowless day of glory,
Life is not all one lightless night of gloom;
Checked for ever is our human story,
Checked the time of fallow, time of bloom.
Sun never rose that did not cast a shade,
Before, behind, oblique, on either side;
Light were not light, if darkness lent not aid,
By darkness only light is deified.
Night never fell, engulfing in its blackness
Lost creatures, but some little candle threw
Long light upon the path, to speed the slackness
Of hopeless footsteps that have lost their clue.
So light and shadow weave their mingled web,
Be life at highest flood or lowest ebb.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.
Also sold by all Booksellers.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 512.

SATURDAY, MAY 16, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

STORY OF WEDDERBURN.

IN one of the old closes of Edinburgh, usually known as the Mint Close, there may be seen, near the lower end of the lane, on the left-hand side in going down, a tall massive building, with a stair leading to the different floors, each a separate dwelling. To reach the entrance to the stair, over which, till lately, was the date 1679, we have to cross a small paved court. The whole aspect of the place has a certain aristocratic character, and we should rightly conclude that the dwellings in the stair had at one time occupants of some local distinction. At the middle of last century, one of the floors formed the residence of Peter Wedderburn, a Lord of Session with the judicial title of Lord Chesterhall; such designation being adopted by him from his patrimonial estate of Chesterhall, lying about twelve miles south of Edinburgh.

The Wedderburns were an old family in Scotland, noticed in history, but their possessions had dwindled down to the Chesterhall property, which was no more than a moderately sized farm, with an antiquated mansion, and a pigeon-house, as was customary with old domains where some style was kept up. It was a pleasant enough spot. The laird farmed the land himself, killed his own mutton; and from the well-stocked pigeon-house, as also from a tolerably spacious poultry-yard, the lady of the establishment drew supplies as a variety on ordinary fare. Being much away on his duties connected with the court, of which he had risen to be a judge, after having spent years as a practising advocate, the laird could not avoid having a town residence, and accordingly had pitched himself in what was considered a genteel quarter, at the foot of the Mint Close. Here he had for neighbour, a little higher up the lane, the Earl of Selkirk, whose house was subsequently occupied by Dr Daniel Rutherford, uncle of Sir Walter Scott.

Peter Wedderburn, before rising to the bench, had married into a family quite as respectable as his own. His wife was an Ogilvie, descended from the Earls of Airlie. She was a lady who, with

good taste, accommodated herself to her husband's position, whether as a gentleman-farmer or as a judge—not that, in this last-mentioned particular, he added greatly to his income; for Scottish judges in those times were thought to be well paid with from five hundred to a thousand a year. Peter's family was small. We only hear of two children, a son, Alexander, and a daughter, Janet. According to some accounts, Alexander, the son and heir, was born at Chesterhall, 13th February 1733. It seems, however, to be more accurately stated that the place of his birth was the Mint Close. Here, at the town residence of the family, he certainly spent much of his boyish days, playing at marbles in the little court-yard with youngsters like himself. Could any one have imagined, on looking at the boy, Alexander Wedderburn, when engaged in these juvenile sports, that he would some day be Lord Chancellor of England, or that his sister, Janet, would be the ancestress of a peer of the realm! Yet, such were their respective destinies—so marvellous a development from the Mint Close, that one can never be sure what may turn up from the obscurest localities.

Alec, as he was ordinarily called, grew up a sharp active boy, precocious, not easily discouraged. It was a great thing for him, that his mother was a woman of a naturally good understanding, with a high sense of duty. Besides being a capital housekeeper, she possessed literary tastes, and by her assiduous teaching, materially promoted the education of her son. Peter, the father, took things easily, and, though a respectable judge, was not renowned as anything brilliant. To the mother, the boy appears to have owed almost everything. She roused his aspirations, impressed him with a love of books, endeavoured to moderate his restlessness, and was his faithful mentor. As the pretty town of Dalkeith, which lies half-way between Chesterhall and Edinburgh, was reputed to have a good grammar-school, kept by Mr James Barclay, young Alec was sent thither, to be grounded in Latin and Greek, in which he acquired a tolerable proficiency. At fourteen years of age, he was matriculated at the university of Edinburgh.

The object of all this education was to prepare young Wedderburn to follow in his father's footsteps, as an advocate, and possibly as a Lord of Session. Anything superior to that, old Peter could not imagine for his boy, along with the reversion of Chesterhall and the venerable dovecot. At seventeen to eighteen years of age, when it was desirable to think of a profession, Alec did not absolutely repudiate the idea of going to the bar of the Court of Session. He submitted to the requisite training, but he had begun to be dissatisfied with the prospect, and was fired with notions of making his way at the courts of Westminster. There were already two or three instances of young Scotchmen distinguishing themselves at the English bar. The most notable of these was the Hon. William Murray, son of Viscount Stormont, who was now Attorney-general, became Lord Chief-justice of the King's Bench, and died Earl of Mansfield. There were no such trump cards in Scotland. Alec formed a resolution to take the earliest opportunity to sacrifice his prospects in the north, and go to England. Peter, the father, being communicated with on the subject, did not at all relish his son's idea of not going decently on as the laird of Chesterhall, as well as an advocate, and an expectant Lord of Session. Still he did not utterly discountenance the project of entering at the English bar, and to humour his son, introduced him to Hume Campbell, residing at the seat of his brother, the Earl of Marchmont, and who from experience could speak of the chances of success by going to the bar at Westminster. The result was unsatisfactory. Campbell, a little out of temper with the youth's loquacity and pretensions, thought him to be an empty foolish lad, and recommended the father to get him an ensign in the army, as the only thing for which he was fitted. Alec treasured up this unfavourable opinion, and secretly vowed to shew him the fallacy of his disparaging remarks.

No way discouraged, but with an inborn resolution to qualify for the English bar, young Wedderburn took a journey to London, to look about him, and learn all needful particulars. This was in 1753. As an intimate friend of David Hume, he received from him a letter of introduction to Dr. Clephane, a Scotch physician, who was able to advise him. What Alec learned on the occasion confirmed him in his intentions. Before quitting London, he entered himself as a barrister at the Inner Temple, and remained sufficiently long to dine at the Hall in Easter and Trinity terms. Back he came to Edinburgh, underwent his Civil Law Trials, and entered at the Scottish Bar in June 1754. Of course, this was only a make-shift. For three years he walked the Parliament House, with little to do as an advocate. In the General Assembly of the Church he distinguished himself for his oratorical displays, but this led to little, and he pined to try his hand in the south. A circumstance of a curious nature precipitated his migra-

tion. It has been often related, but hardly twice the same way. Lord Campbell, in his *Lives of the Chancellors*, mentions that at this time the Dean of the Faculty of Advocates was a veteran at the bar, named Lockhart, a man of such an overbearing disposition, that several juniors resolved to take an opportunity of affronting him before the court. Wedderburn happened to have the first chance, and it suited him to embrace it, for he was desirous to quit Edinburgh, and cared not what might be the upshot.

This memorable affair came off in July or the beginning of August 1757, at which time Alec was twenty-four years of age. In a case in which he was concerned, Lockhart, with his accustomed rudeness, spoke of young Wedderburn as 'a presumptuous boy!' Here was the much-desired opportunity. Calmly rising, he said: 'The learned Dean has confined himself to vituperation. I do not say he is capable of reasoning; but if tears would have answered his purpose, I am sure tears would not have been wanting.' Starting up in a rage, Lockhart threatened vengeance. With imperturbable audacity, Wedderburn uttered some biting remarks in allusion to a painful domestic circumstance, which had brought Lockhart into discredit. At such an outbreak, the court was in profound amazement. The President firmly declared that Mr Wedderburn's language was unbecoming in an advocate or gentleman. This only roused him to a further assault. He exclaimed that his lordship had stated as a judge what he could not justify as a gentleman. The wand of peace was now thoroughly broken. He was ordered to retract his words and apologise, on pain of deprivation. The scene that ensued was without a parallel in the Court of Session. 'All of a sudden,' says Lord Campbell, 'Wedderburn seemed to have subdued his passion, and put on an air of deliberate coolness—when, instead of the expected retraction and apology, he stripped off his gown, and holding it in his hands before the judges, he said: "My Lords, I neither retract nor apologise; but I will save you the trouble of deprivation; there is my gown, and I will never wear it more; *virtute me involvo* (I enrobe myself in virtue)." He then coolly laid his gown upon the bar, made a low bow to the judges, and before they had recovered from their amazement, he left the court, which he never again entered.'

It could be shewn that Lord Campbell has erred in stating that Lockhart was at that time Dean of Faculty; he was at anyrate a leading member of the bar, and the details of the incident, as related, are substantially correct. The occurrence caused much commotion in legal and other circles. Young as he was, Wedderburn had won his way into the best literary and professional society in Edinburgh. All were aghast at his audacity in outraging the decorum of the court, and there was not a little surprise that he had been suffered to escape with impunity. It would have been a heart-breaking thing for old Peter, had he been seated

on the bench on the occurrence of this escapade. He had died the year previously, and was spared so distressing a circumstance. In point of fortune, Wedderburn sacrificed little by quitting Scotland. Chesterhall was burdened with debt, and the fees at the bar had been insignificant. Still, his conduct was unwarrantable, and could neither leave pleasing recollections, nor contribute to his advancement in the new field he had chosen. He lost no time in preparations for departure. Leaving orders for his books to be sent to him by sea, he quitted Edinburgh for London on the evening of the day in which he bowed his farewell to the court. Carrying with him only a small valise, he set off in the stage-coach, which occupied six tedious days in the journey.

Arriving in town comparatively poor, but with an earnest resolution to advance himself by all proper means, Wedderburn possessed brilliant talents, which only required to be known. Settling down in a set of chambers at the Temple, and considering the probabilities of success, he found he had first of all to overcome a serious drawback. This was his Scotch intonation. Resolute in vanquishing this defect—which was then thought to be of more importance than it is in these less fastidious times—he put himself as a pupil under Sheridan, and afterwards under Macklin. Both were Irishmen, but their elocution was excellent; and in their desire to help on the young Scotchman, they introduced him to their dramatic friends. The Green-Room and Stage became a school in which to study a pure English pronunciation, and this Wedderburn was not long in picking up. Being 'called to the Bar,' and equipped with gown and wig for practice in the Court of King's Bench, the consideration now was how to get briefs. Scottish clanishness stood him in good stead. His sister, Janet, had married Sir Henry Erskine, Bart., a descendant of the seventh Earl of Mar, through the Erskines of Alva, and who, besides being a lieutenant-general in the army, was colonel of the Royal Scots. This proved a good marriage for Janet, and it had a beneficial influence on her brother's fortunes. Colonel Sir Henry Erskine was a friend of Lord Bute; through which channel, and aided by a number of prosperous Scotchmen in London, Wedderburn pushed his way, was thought a wonderfully clever fellow, and began to secure the confidence of attorneys. The decease of George II. and accession of George III. with the Bute ministry, gave him a considerable lift. Professing himself a warm partisan of the government, he was returned to the House of Commons as member for the Rothesay and Inverary group of burghs.

With the House of Commons as an arena for his abilities, Wedderburn had now the ball at his foot. Business flowed in upon him. In 1763, he was made a king's counsel, and obtained a silk gown, a preferment of which, by letter, he apprised his mother, who looked with anxiety to the outcome of Alec's migration southward. How, with these beginnings, Wedderburn rose step by step in his career, belongs to history. We are sorry to say, he cannot be represented as a man of high integrity or acute sense of honour. Political consistency he thought little about. His object was professional aggrandisement. Doubtless, as regards looseness of principle, there were examples

on all sides. The early years of the reign of George III., in which were embraced the blunders and distractions of the American war, are not to be looked back upon with satisfaction. Like a stormy petrel, Wedderburn contrived to swim on the top of the waves. His powers of sarcasm and invective were terrific. Few dared to face him. Early in his business career, he had an opportunity of attacking Hume Campbell; inflicting on him such a castigation, as to drive him from the bar of the Court of King's Bench, and to seek refuge in the Court of Chancery. Though guilty of this vindictiveness, Wedderburn was not without remorseful feelings. He was conscious of having done a wrong to Lockhart, which, on rising into power, he did his best to remedy by paying attention to his son at the English bar. Lockhart himself, at the age of seventy-five, is said to have been promoted to the bench on his recommendation.

Wedderburn's success was facilitated by his early study of the Civil Law, and the blending of Law and Equity, which he had been accustomed to in the Court of Session. Practice in the Court of Chancery came easily to him. With this advantage, along with his marked ability as a speaker—and we might say as a trimmer—his promotion was rapid. He became Attorney-general; next, he was made Chief-justice of the Common Pleas; and at length, 1780, was summoned to the House of Lords as Lord Loughborough. In 1793, he was appointed Lord Chancellor, and now was at the summit of his ambition. It is instructive to know that the possession of the Great Seal, on which he had long set his heart, imparted no solid happiness. He acknowledged that he had been pursuing a vain phantom; and in that candid avowal have we not the moral that may be drawn from his successful but troubled career?

We approach the end. Lord Loughborough gave up the Great Seal in 1801; at the same time being advanced to the dignity of Earl of Rosslyn. Now in his old days, and with no longer any necessity to maintain his artificial accent, the old Scotch vernacular came back upon him, and he spoke as if fresh from 'a game at the bools' in the Mint Close. That close, with its huge dark building and little plain-stoned court, he wished to see before he died. Visiting Edinburgh for the purpose, he was too feeble to walk down the narrow lane, and was carried in a sedan-chair to the scene of his boyish games. What he specially desired to ascertain was, whether the holes in the pavement to which the marbles had been knuckled sixty years ago, were still preserved. There they were still intact. He was satisfied. His last wish was fulfilled. With little to admire in this extraordinary man, it must be admitted that his pilgrimage to the Mint Close, shewed a degree of sensibility that almost redeems him from some of his failings.

Wedderburn—to call him by his original name—was twice married, but at his death he left no issue. He died, 2d January 1805, and his remains were honoured with a public funeral in St Paul's Cathedral. His titles of Loughborough and Rosslyn, devolved, in terms of the patent, upon his nephew, Sir James Erskine, a son of his sister Janet, and from Sir James is descended the present Earl of Rosslyn. It need only be added, that the Chesterhall property, long the seat of the Wedderburns, is now merged in the domain of Oxenford, belonging to the Earl of Stair. The old mansion where

Peter Wedderburn used to recreate himself in the intervals of Session, is vanished, but the antique dovecot, as is usual with such structures, is, we believe, 'still to the fore,' and forms a picturesque object in the landscape.

W. C.

ON THE MANTEL-PIECE.

MANTEL is an old French word, signifying the work raised before a chimney, in the interior of a chamber, to conceal it. In these days, we have cut down this mantling-work till it is only a smooth slab of marble, or stone, capped with a shelf to carry 'chimney ornaments;' but, in the houses of our forefathers, it rose from the wide opening over the hearth to the ceiling. Sometimes, as far back as the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, it extended across the width of one end of the hall, or chamber, in which it was placed, as may be seen in one of the examples in the South Kensington Museum. It was always supported on jambs (the French equivalent for legs), which were treated as part of the composition; and so much ornamentation was expended upon it, that it required no further decoration to make it the chief feature in an apartment. A row of warriors, in martial array, sculptured in stone, graced some mantel-pieces. Sometimes angels were carved upon them; especially upon those belonging to monastic houses; but more frequently they were chosen as a centre for heraldic displays. Besides the coats of arms of the owners, they also bore their mottoes. But when an edifice was built by a prosperous merchant beneath the dignity of heraldic recognition, a sentence from the Scriptures, or a couplet embodying welcome, advice, or admonition, was occasionally carved upon the mantel-piece of the chief chamber.

Derbyshire presents us with a few examples of coats of arms, dates, and initials on mantel-pieces. In Haddon Hall, the towered and turreted mansion in the green pastures close to the winding Wye, where the Vernons kept open house in the old days of the Tudors, there is a specimen of this combination. It occurs on the oaken chimney-piece in the drawing-room; where are carved the arms of Sir George Vernon, the arms of Henry VIII. a plume of feathers, and the initials E. P. There is a second heraldic example at Hardwick Hall, where Mary Queen of Scots spent some of the days of her long captivity. This is an Elizabethan mansion, with a front full of large transomed windows, finished with an open-work parapet in which the letters E. S. are placed at intervals. These last are the initials of Elizabeth, Countess of Shrewsbury, who built the Hall in the last decade of the sixteenth century. In the great dining-room there is a chimney-piece with the arms of the countess and the date 1597. At Barlborough Hall, another handsome mansion-house, with large transomed windows and embattled turrets, built in the reign of Elizabeth, there occur several inscriptions on a sculptured stone chimney-piece. The builder of this fine Hall was Francis Rodes, one of the justices of the Common Pleas, and the mantel-piece was probably the pride of his house and heart. There are statues of Justice and Religion in it, and two shields of the arms of

Rodes with different impalements, indicating that the worthy justice had two wives. Above the shields he caused to be carved: 'Francis Rodes, serviens d'ne Regine ad legem. Anno Dni 1584, ætatis suæ 50;' and below them: 'Constitutus iudiciarius de Banco Communi, 30 Eliz.'

At Enfield, Middlesex, there is still standing a palace in which Queen Elizabeth lived, and, perhaps, played upon the virginals to groups of admirers. In this residence, which is comparatively small and homely, there is a panelled chamber with bay-windows, and a great mantel-piece rising up to the cornice of the panelled ceiling. The mantel-piece is supported on two classic columns, and divided into three compartments, consisting of a centre and two wings. In the wide central panel are the arms of England; on one side those of Westminster, and on the other the Tudor rose. Below the side panels are the initials E. and R.; and below the centre, on a scroll, is a pious inscription in Latin. There is another Elizabethan example in Bramall Hall, one of the Halls of the old Lancastrian gentry, near Manchester. 'Vive la Roynne,' the gallant owner caused to be inscribed on his mantel-piece, as he thought of the 'fair vestal throned in the west.' And there is a Welsh specimen of the same date in the great Hall at Newton, Brecon. This sturdy stone mansion, with its steep gables and small window-openings, was the home of the family of Games. Shakspeare gives the name of Davy Games in the list of English dead which the herald presented to Henry V. 'Where is the number of our English dead?' asks the king. 'Edward the Duke of York, the Earl of Suffolk, Sir Richard Kelly, Davy Gam Esquire, none else of name,' continues the monarch. David Games was an ancestor of whom a man might be proud, thought his representative in the following century, as he pondered over the details of the battle-field, newly brought to notice by the genius of the dramatist; and he caused this inscription, in the Welsh language, to be cut over the fire-place of his principal room: 'John Games, the son and eldest heir of Edward Games, ap John, ap Morgan, ap Edward, ap Morgan, ap Dafydd Gam 1582. On God depends everything. Games.'

At one time, the fancy for inscribing mottoes upon mantel-pieces was so much in vogue, and so many mottoes suggested themselves as suitable, that the walls and cornices were taken into account, and likewise covered with them. The Earl of Northumberland caused the walls and cornices of his seats at Leckenfield and Wressell to be so treated. In such cases, the decorator only was employed, and when a fresh coat of paint was required, the trite sayings were painted out. An instance of a painted inscription upon a mantel-piece was discovered a few months ago in an upper room in a house in High Street, Tewkesbury. Some alterations were required, and, on some brick-work being taken down, an old fire-place was uncovered, with this inscription painted over it in old English characters: 'Three thinges pleceeth booth God and man: Concorde betwene brethren: Amytie betwene nayghbours: and a man and his wyfe that agreeth well together. Fower thinges hurt much the site of man: Teares, smocke, wynde, and the worst of all to se his frends unluckye and his fose happye. These fyve thinges are rare sene: A fayer yonge womane with ought a lover,

a yonge man with ought myerth, an old useseror with ought money, aney great fayer with ought theffes, a fare harne with ought music.' The letters of this inscription were black, except the initials, which were painted red. We read, too, of another painted motto in an account drawn up of the Duke of Beaufort's progress through Wales in the reign of Charles II. This was in an upper room, too, 'boarded in panes,' that is to say, panelled, and the chimney-piece was supported on two columns, and enriched with busts of Seneca and Aristotle. The inscription was in golden letters: 'Deus primum, honos proxime.'

Although, like the old custom of placing legends over doorways, the fashion of making our mantel-pieces sermonise is no longer in vogue, it was not abruptly discontinued. It lingered down to the days of the celebrated Dr Kitchener, who inscribed upon the chimney-piece of his dining-room an intimation to his guests: 'At seven, come; at eleven, go,' much to the delight of one of them, who could not resist the fun of entirely altering the purport of it by adding the little word 'it' to the sober sentence. At Preston Hall, in Northumberland, there is a comparatively modern inscription over a mantel-piece. It probably dates from the last century. The first three lines are convex, and the last two concave, while the word 'therefore' is placed in a central position:

Spend the day well, and you will rejoice at night.
No good man can be miserable, nor bad man happy,
Whether rich or poor.

Therefore,

May you your days in peace and wisdom spend,
That endless peace may crown your latter end.

Within a few miles of this seat, nearer the brown rocky coast, stands Craster Hall, where the same legend occurs, or did occur, in a similar position.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—THE TUNNEL.

It was curious, and exemplified most powerfully her appreciation of her husband's character, that Maggie did not even now believe that he had broken his word. It would have been only natural, and very pardonable, if, considering what she knew of his intention, her first thought, upon finding that John had not come up-stairs, should have been that he was lying in the room beneath, slain by his own hand. Her mind was full of wretched presentiments, but it did not forecast that ghastly picture. She listened, indeed, with throbbing brain and beating heart to the house-keeper's movements below-stairs, but not with the fear that some terrible cry should presently break forth to tell her that John was dead. She thought it probable that he had left some letter behind him (just as Richard had done), and that presently Mrs Morden would come upon it, and bring it to her. He would surely never leave her without one word of explanation, either spoken or written, and thus add the most terrible link of all to the chain of mystery that surrounded her. But when this did not happen, she became consumed with a worse terror. Suppose he had gone forth and met with Dennis Blake, and in some endeavour to conciliate him—for the idea that he had cause to fear that man, was fixed in her mind—had fallen into a fresh

quarrel, which had had fatal results! He had passed his word to abstain from violence towards him, as respected what had already occurred between them; but some new insult or menace might have proved too much for his patience, and have brought the guilt of blood upon his head. She did not think of that now, as she had done when the crime had been only in contemplation; if it were indeed committed, she felt that all her compassion would be for him who had wrought the deed, and not for his victim; that her first and only thought would be to save him from the consequences of his act.

The consequences! Could imagination conceive anything more terrible than these? What was slander, of which she had thought so much, when that had been all there was to think of; nay, what had been even the dissipation of her early dreams of love, when matched with *this*? All human misery was, it now appeared, comparative; she had fancied that her lines had been sounding its depths, when they had, in fact, been only stirring its surface. If only this hideous suspicion should prove to be unfounded, all other burdens she might have to bear would seem as light as air. If only *this* cloud might pass away, the sky of life would be blue for ever. From her reply to Mrs Morden, her husband's absence would, of course, be unsuspected, and unless he had himself made it known, might be kept concealed for days. Would it be better to conceal it, so as to give him an opportunity for escape? Or would her doing so fix the guilt of what he might have done upon him? What excuse could she give for the deception which should not be connected with its cause? Upon the whole, she judged it best to own that he had left the house, and, at the same time, to exhibit as little concern as was compatible with the circumstances of the case. To make up a story that should explain his absence, was far beyond her powers; and even could she do so, how could she withstand the showers of questions that would be poured in upon her from all sides; how deceive, with consistency such keen inquirers as her father and Mr Linch?

Nay, would not the constant and persevering interrogations of the gossiping housekeeper, though more easily parried, be a still more intolerable infliction. In any case, not a moment was to be lost in making her choice of these miserable alternatives. As the servant-girl passed her room-door, Maggie put her head out, and inquired whether she had seen her master. 'He felt better this morning,' said she, 'as I told Mrs Morden, and insisted upon getting up.' It was the first time in her life that Maggie had told a premeditated lie, yet she felt no confusion; the conditions of her being had become exceptional, and her moral perceptions had changed with them; she, in her turn, had become gray at heart in a single half-hour.

'He's not down-stairs, ma'am,' replied Lucy stolidly: 'perhaps he is walking in the garden.'

It was not a likely thing for an invalid to do on a winter's morning before breakfast-time; but Maggie felt quite thankful to the girl for her Boeotian suggestion. If every one were as dull and indifferent as she, her future course would not be so set with pitfalls as it was likely to be. It was something, too, to feel that Lucy would go down and break the news to Mrs Morden that John was not within.

The housekeeper, as she expected, at once came hurrying up: 'Lor, ma'am, why, the girl tells me as master is up and out, and the snow's a-falling.'

'It is very imprudent, certainly,' said Maggie, but in tones so low and stifled, that they must needs have been lost on the old woman.

'Such weather is a'most enough to kill him,' continued the excited dame; 'why, he must surely have lost his head.'

Here was another grain of comfort undesignedly cast before the unhappy Maggie; if this suggestion, that John had 'lost his head,' could be worked out, the worst—that is, the very worst she feared—might yet find some mitigation. At all events, it was a chance that, in her helpless plight, was not to be thrown away.

'He has been very ill and very strange, Mrs Morden,' returned she, with emphasis. 'I have not been able to make him out at all.'

'Lor, he has been light-headed and that, then, has he? Well, now, if I didn't suspect it! Says I to Lucy only last night: What can be the reason as missis don't wish me to attend to master, but must needs wait on him herself? I shouldn't wonder if he was a bit delirious. Not that Master John is one to have secrets or commit hisself' (how this random shaft quivered in poor Maggie's heart!) 'but that one doesn't like one's own flesh and blood, or the bone of one's bone, at least, which is nigher still, to talk at random before other people. Poor Morden himself used to do it, though that was drink, poor fellow, and it used to vex me most uncommon. But, dear heart, ma'am, if he is gone queer, should we not send out for help at once, lest he should do himself a mischief?'

'No, no; I apprehend nothing of that sort. I will go out and seek for him myself; and, in the meantime, pray, say nothing about it to anybody.'

Maggie knew she could not have devised a better means of getting it noised abroad that John was *non compos mentis*, than the laying this injunction upon the worthy old lady, who was as incapable of reticence concerning the affairs of those about her as Dame Eleanor Spearing in Hood's ballad. If John should return, it was easy to affect that his attack had been temporary, due to some access of fever; and if he should not return, for the terrible reason that had suggested itself, the law would be tender to him. The very change in his appearance would go a long way to prove his insanity, if it should be necessary to set up that plea. In the shipwreck of her life, she clung to this poor scheme with feverish persistency, and for the moment it buoyed her up. It had an immediate value, too, since it absolved her from the necessity of explaining anything. Everybody was left by it to form his own conclusions. But in the meantime, some sort of action was demanded of her. She put on her bonnet and shawl, and announced her intention of going in person to Mitchell Street; it was possible, she said, that her husband had gone thither; and, at all events, it was only right that she should at once inform her father of what had taken place. So much, at least, was necessary to satisfy the proprieties in the eyes of Mrs Morden; and, upon the whole, it seemed the most natural thing to do in the case suggested; if she had herself suspected John to be deranged, she would not have been satisfied with sending others to look for him. At the same time, Maggie trembled at the notion of leaving home, even for an hour, lest tidings should

in the meantime arrive there which might need judicious interpretation. However, she at once set out, though the snow was by this time beginning to fall thickly. At a few paces from home, indeed, the house itself was scarcely visible, and taking advantage of this circumstance, she could not resist entering the toolhouse, unperceived, upon her way to the gate. It was from thence that John had taken the spade and pickaxe, and there they now lay, just within the doorway, where she had seen him throw them down. She had examined the place the day before, but there was a vague attraction about it—though an attraction of repulsion—which still haunted her. It was a bare common edifice of its kind enough. Empty flower-pots, and odds and ends of matting, strewed the unpaved floor, and, notwithstanding the season, it was pervaded by a smell of mould, as though the gardening operation of 'potting' had been but recently carried on in it. This smell was more powerful where the wood was stacked in a huge pile upon the side nearest to the house, and it seemed to her that the stack did not present the same appearance as it had done yesterday. On closer inspection, she felt convinced of this; and, on rolling a log or two away, and moving some brushwood, she came upon the cause—a considerable heap of newly dug-out earth. Exploring further, she discovered an orifice in the floor, communicating with a damp dark passage, large enough to permit of the entrance of a human body. That was the precise image that her thought suggested, just as if it had been expressed in words: large enough 'for a human body'; and an unspeakable terror took possession of her soul, as the idea occurred to her: suppose that hole had been excavated for the very purpose to receive the body of Dennis Blake!

Her limbs seemed to give way beneath her, and she sat down with beating heart upon a huge overturned basket, the only substitute for a seat the place afforded. She had taxed her husband with digging a grave, and he had not denied it. What if the grave were within a few feet of her! Though she knew that no actual crime had been committed, she felt as though she were actually in the presence of a murdered corpse. The very smell of the earth made her sick and faint. The basket, she now discovered, had been filled with it; it had evidently been used for carrying out what had been dug from the hole. She examined the spade and pickaxe, and felt quite a relief to find that the soil attaching to them was not of the same kind, but was mixed with gravel. It was not *here*, then, that John had been working last night, but in the little wood, or spinney, from which she had seen him coming with the lantern, and which was in the neighbourhood of the gravel-pit. A sudden instinct caused her to smear the flat of the spade and the point of the pick with the earth about her; the discovery of what had happened here was probably inevitable, but she would leave no hint of what had happened elsewhere. As to what *had* happened, she knew nothing; but she felt she was on the verge of some discovery, if only she had the courage to make it. With a silent prayer for strength and mercy, and both for another's sake as well as for her own, Maggie once more approached the excavation. The narrow passage into which it led was not, she now perceived, utterly dark; a gray gleam of light struggled into it from the other end. It ran in a gradual slant towards the house, and more

than once she slipped on the damp surface, as she felt her way, bent almost double, along the narrow path. The gray light, however, increased, and by the time she had reached the termination of the passage, and emerged into a walled chamber, she was able to recognise it as the cellar, through the grating of which the clear morning rays were streaming. The cause, then, of the underground noises she had heard at night was at once apparent: they had been made by the strokes of the pickaxe, when the man at work in the passage had come to the cellar-wall, and begun to loosen the bricks. No wonder that, having seen no sign of disturbance of the soil, or of the grating without, her suspicions of some thief having effected an entrance below-stairs had been set at rest, for who could have dreamt of such a method of ingress as had been really adopted.

That the robber was Dennis Blake, she could have no doubt; reduced to beggary and ruin, it was not unlikely that the idea should have struck him, of thus possessing himself unsuspected of the wine in her husband's cellar, with the value of which he was so well acquainted; but as to what had caused his offence to be condoned, and the offender to be taken into her husband's confidence, that was a mystery as great as ever.

In the place in which Maggie now found herself, she had never before set foot. The cellar, it will be remembered, had been bricked up by John's orders, on the very morning after his brother's sudden departure, and in a sort of abhorrence, as was understood, of the habits of life which had led to it and to poor Richard's ruin, and as a testimony against them. The last person who had entered it by the door had been probably Richard himself.

Nothing since that time had, apparently, been removed, and, indeed, it was certain that the marauder had been discovered just at the moment when he had first made good his entrance. The bins still contained a considerable supply of wine, and the undisturbed dust of years had accumulated upon them. By the steps leading to the bricked-up door was a broken bottle, the contents of which, long dried up, had left a dark stain on the stone floor. The whole scene presented a picture of desolation and desertion, in which there was small temptation to tarry. Moreover, there was a chance, however slender, while she did so, of some one coming to the toolhouse, and finding what she had found. Maggie, therefore, retraced her steps thither as quickly as the slipperiness of the incline would permit; and, having covered the excavation with timber and brushwood, so as to conceal it from any casual visitor, she took her way to her father's house.

CHAPTER XXIX.—JOHN'S LEGACY.

But for that chance suggestion of honest Mrs Morden's, Maggie's task with her father would have been difficult indeed. She would have had to invent some incredible story, to account for her husband's absence, and would have contradicted herself in a thousand particulars. As it was, she had merely to describe John's sudden and unaccountable illness, his strangeness of manner and aspect (without, however, mentioning the actual transformation that had taken place with him in the latter respect), and lastly, his inexplicable

disappearance, to produce the very effect that she most desired.

'Why, who could have thought it! John must have gone mad,' was, in fact, the engraver's involuntary exclamation, on hearing her tidings; and though, shocked, upon Maggie's account, at his imprudence, he immediately strove to soften the force of his own words, she saw that they represented his belief.

'No doubt,' said he, 'this is but some temporary aberration, probably the result of fever, for your husband is just the very last man in the world to become a lunatic; so judicious, so calm and unexcitable, and even, under the most trying circumstances—with one single exception, which might have stirred a stoic—has always shewn so much self-command and self-restraint.'

How well she knew it, and how poignantly that reference to his quarrel with Dennis Blake went to her very soul! John was not mad, she felt, and also that that very man was, somehow or other, the cause of his appearing to be so. Blake might be lying dead at that moment, and he who slew him fleeing from the far-reaching hands of outraged Justice, and what should she do to aid his flight?

'The first thing, Maggie, as it seems to me, that we should set about,' returned her father gravely, 'is to advertise the fact of his disappearance. It is sure to attract notice enough, considering that the very same thing—though under widely different circumstances—happened to his brother before him. Sympathy may be lacking in John's case, for he was far too good to be appreciated, save by the few who really knew him; but interest will certainly not be wanting, and interest in this matter is only another name for help. He cannot have gone far; and it is all-important to take prompt measures: we should at once send word to the papers and to the police.'

'Not yet, father, not yet,' answered Maggie earnestly. 'Suppose John should come back—and, for all we know, he may be at home this very moment; and the fit, or whatever it may be, should have passed away—consider how vexed and annoyed he would be at our having made such a disturbance about him. He is, as you say, by no means so popular as he deserves to be, and malicious tongues have been busy with him enough, as it is.'

'There is reason in that,' returned the engraver thoughtfully; 'and his sudden disappearance is sure to suggest to people what occurred to Richard, and so reopen that old sore. Indeed, one could not expect it to be otherwise. The coincidence is certainly most extraordinary: some wicked fools will be quite capable of calling it a "judgment," no doubt. It is just two years ago, is it not, and the very same time of year?'

'I forget—I believe so,' said Maggie, her thoughts incapable of dwelling upon Richard's fate at all. 'It seems to me that it would be far better to do nothing at present, but only to hope and wait.'

'Well, well, dear, perhaps you are right; we will not authorise the matter to be made public. Still, it is quite certain to ooze out, if not to-day, to-morrow: it will be impossible to keep Mrs Morden's tongue from running, for one thing. If she were but immortal, the principle of perpetual motion would have been discovered at once. Still, for your credit's sake—for it will seem so strange to

sit down under such a catastrophe, and make no sign—I think I will just step round to Mr Linch, and tell him in confidence what has happened. He is a good man, and not a fool, notwithstanding that he is next kin to one' (this was in reference to his sister Martha), 'and his advice may be worth having. It was a thousand pities, my dear Maggie, that you didn't send for the doctor, when your husband was first taken ill, for the symptoms might then have been detected, and we should have been put upon our guard.'

'John objected to that,' said Maggie quietly. It was a relief to her when she could give an answer without reflecting upon its possible consequences. 'I don't think he would have seen Dr Naylor, even if you had sent him to Rosebank.'

'I daresay not: he was doubtless very obstinate, which is itself, I believe—that is, in men—a sign of aberration. With women, it is just the other way; not that you were ever obstinate, Maggie, except in one thing, and you thought better of that in the end. Even as things look for the moment, you don't repent, darling, of having given way about that, do you?'

'No, father,' sighed Maggie: 'I have had no cause to repent; dear John has always been the best of husbands to me.'

'And you have paid him back at last as he deserved,' said the old man fondly. 'Now you have lost him, though it is doubtless but for a little, you have found out how much you love him. These trials are not always sent for evil.—But I am falling into the preaching vein, which naturally reminds me of John Linch. I will just call and have a few words with him—I don't offer to take you with me, because of that magpie Martha, who is sure to insist upon seeing you; and then I will come on to Rosebank, where I trust to hear better news. Here's Master Willie come, in the meantime, to comfort you.'

This referred to the entrance of the maid with her young charge, whose hands and face she had polished up to a fine pitch, in order to greet his adopted mother. The engraver's words had been mere matters of course; but the sight of the child—whose very existence she had for the moment almost forgotten—was really a balm to Maggie of wondrous potency.

As she clasped him in her arms, the welcome tears rained from her eyes for the first time since her miseries had fallen upon her: the iron band that had seemed to press upon her forehead relaxed a little, and the gloom of the future was pierced by a ray of light. Here was something, whatever happened, to live for, and to love. The next moment, remembering that her father at least remained to her, tender and devoted as he had ever been, she reproached herself for the thought; but, in truth, there was no need to do so. It was the dependence of the child upon herself that had so deeply moved her. She was necessary to it, and would be so for years to come; and, as it crowded for joy, and smoothed her cheek with hands not more soft than it, she felt a rest and solace which not all the art of Measner has the power to bestow upon his votaries. The desire to take the boy back with her to her desolate home, was strong within her; but to have done so now, would have seemed to be to seize the first opportunity of John's absence to take to herself something that had been Richard's, and therefore she put the tempta-

tion from her. With John her lot had been cast, and not even in the eyes of others would she appear to desert him.

It was, nevertheless, with a heavy heart that she returned to Rosebank, to await, in miserable suspense, she knew not what tidings (except that they could not be good) of her missing husband.

Shortly after her return, her father arrived with Mr Linch. The latter gentleman was urgent for immediate action: he had no doubt that John was labouring under an attack of insanity; and pointed out what a great responsibility would rest upon his friends, if he should do a mischief to any one, and they have given no public warning as to his state of mind. He himself searched the house, and explored the garden, including the toolhouse, but discovered nothing. The snow was still falling heavily, and must, long ago, reflected Maggie, with a sense of satisfaction, have obliterated her husband's footmarks of the previous night: disclosure, involving danger and disgrace, seemed to her to lie in the direction of the little wood. When the short day, that seemed more long to her than any day in June, drew to its close, and still John came not, it was pressed upon her that the police should be communicated with, and to this she at last consented. Surely, if the worst she feared had happened—if Blake had come to any violent or sudden end, it would have been noised abroad by this time. Next to news of her husband, she longed to hear some tidings of his enemy: to know that he was alive, even if it was but to work harm to them, would have been an inexpressible comfort.

She had had bad nights of late, but never such a night as this one, in which nothing happened. She had dreaded the solitude of the house, as a timorous child shrinks from the coming dark, but resolutely refused her father's offer to remain at Rosebank. She dared not have a witness to John's return, in case he should return, though she had small hope of that; indeed, she had no hope at all; she felt not only that he would not come back, but that it was well he did not; that it was somehow better for him to be a hundred miles away, and speeding farther still. Yet every blast of wintry wind that shook the door, brought her to her bedroom window, to peer forth for him; and all the noises of the night had dread significance. Now she seemed to hear him moving stealthily about the parlour, and now at work with spade and pickaxe in the cellar beneath. No sick man ever longed for morning as poor Maggie did, nor, when it dawned, gathered such little comfort from the light. In a few hours, all Hilton would learn what had happened, when Rumour would be busy with her woe, and the forked tongues of Malice would flicker about her and hers like flame. Nor did her fears exaggerate what actually took place. She was down betimes, and noticed that every person that came to the door as usual tarried there longer than was his wont—the milkman, and the postman, and the baker—each, doubtless, to satisfy his curiosity by questions, or to express his wonder. She eagerly looked for letters. 'Surely, surely, I shall know something now,' said her beating heart at the postman's knock; but none came; and when she opened the local newspaper, the first paragraph that met her eyes was headed thus: *The Mysterious Disappearance from Rosebank.* As her father had expected, her husband's departure had been at once associated with that of his brother, and a parallel drawn between them.

There was even a sensational suggestion, that some disused and forgotten well-hole might lie within the grounds of Rosebank, where both had met their fate, and a thorough investigation of the locality was recommended. Suppose they should examine the spinney, and discover the new-made grave! In the wildest of her horror at this idea, there arrived, as if to realise it, the inspector of police. Curiously enough, in all her reflections upon what would happen, this inevitable visitor had not occurred to her, and it required all her self-command to meet him with calmness.

He was a mild and gentle-mannered man, however, who evidently sympathised with her position, and would, doubtless, have made every allowance for her confusion. After a few questions, to which she had no difficulty in replying, he inquired with an indifferent air—like one who expects an answer in the negative, and is merely fulfilling a matter of form—whether she had noticed any signs of trouble or anxiety about her husband of late. Here she hesitated, in view of possible contingencies. Would it be better to answer 'Yes,' or 'No?' If 'Yes,' that would lead to fresh inquiries as to the nature of his trouble; if 'No,' that would militate against the theory of his having become deranged.

'Have you any cause, for instance, to suppose Mr Milbank to have been in pecuniary difficulties?' continued the inspector, proceeding with his interrogatory.

'Certainly not,' answered she firmly. 'He had no material cause for disquietude of any kind.'

Here she had fallen into the common error of unaccustomed witnesses, that of saying too much. 'No material cause, you say; was there any imaginary one, then—any unfounded apprehension, for instance?'

'No, no,' answered she hastily. 'I meant material, as opposed to mental. I have an impression that his mind was disturbed, not balanced as equally as usual.'

'Why?'

The inspector had got his note-book out, and was setting down her replies in the methodical manner peculiar to his profession. Why did he not warn her, as she had a vague idea he ought to do, that she need not answer anything of a compromising nature, and that all she did answer would be used to her disadvantage? She found her mind wandering in a legal labyrinth of what was justifiable on the part of a policeman, and what was not, without the power of grasping the subject in hand at all. Was it possible that, under the pressure of her anxieties, she herself was going mad?

'Why?' repeated the inspector, even more persuasively than before, but at the same time regarding her very fixedly. 'Why had you cause to suppose his mind was off its balance?'

'Well, from his manner when he was taken ill: his refusal to send for the doctor, or to let any one see him beside myself.'

'Just so. He never dropped the least hint to you, either before or during his illness, of his intention to leave home?'

'Never. He has never left home, nor wished to do so, even for a day, since we have been married.'

'Never left home, nor wished to do so,' mused the inspector gravely. He was a married man, and wrote her answer down with unusual care, as though it was a phenomenon in human experience.

'Your husband left no letter behind him, of course, nor any document in his desk, or elsewhere, referring even remotely to any intention of departure?'

The inspector said 'of course,' because to examine a man's desk under such circumstances would have occurred to himself as the first thing to be done; but, as a matter of fact, Maggie had made no such examination. John's desk had been as sacred to her in his absence as it was when he was at home, and though she at once perceived that she ought not to have left that stone unturned, she was not going to confess it in the presence of one who might propose to assist—and perhaps have the authority to do so—in prosecuting such a research. If there was anything in that desk to explain this mystery, her own eyes, and no other's, should be the first to penetrate it.

'My husband left behind him no allusion to his departure of any kind,' said Maggie. 'I have no more conception what has become of him than you yourself.' There was something in her manner, perhaps, as well as her words, that suggested a termination of the interview, for the inspector here asked permission to look over the house and premises, and for the present took his leave.

Maggie could not help speculating within herself as to the result of his investigations; he could hardly expect to find John himself, and it occurred to her, that being accustomed to the exploitation of burglaries, he was following his instincts, without having regard to the particular case in hand. In this, however, she underrated Mr Inspector's intelligence, whose maxim was to consider nothing beneath his attention, when engaged in any inquiry, and when it was possible to look into everything with his own eyes.

Presently, he returned, with the same demeanour of undemonstrative calm as before, to put still another question or two before taking leave of the lady of the house.

'I believe Mr Milbank was a very abstemious gentleman; was he not, madam?' The speaker's use of the past tense jarred upon her for the second time; it seemed to corroborate the presentiment within her that she should never see her husband more.

'Yes, he was very temperate in his habits,' said Maggie. 'Indeed, he was a teetotaler.'

'So I understand, ma'am; which is, in fact, the very reason why I have a certain suspicion. Teetotalers, like the rest of the world, sometimes repent themselves of their good intentions, and yet don't wish to appear back-sliders, as they call it. You will excuse my plainness of speech, interpolated the inspector blandly, 'in consideration of the object I have in view.'

'Most certainly,' replied Maggie quietly. 'But my husband was never intoxicated in his life; at least, I will answer for him during his married life. You are quite on the wrong scent, if you imagine drink has anything to do with this unhappy matter.'

'Yet, Mr Milbank bricked up his cellar-door, did he not? Now, don't you think that looked like a want of confidence in himself?'

'O no; that was done for quite a different reason.'

'And he never repented of the circumstance, you think, nor of having taken the pledge?'

'Never.'

'Would it not surprise you, then, madam, to

learn,' continued the inspector, sinking his voice to a confidential whisper, 'that there is a means of communicating with the cellar beneath this room, independently of the door, so that one might go and help one's self to wine without the knowledge of persons in the house?'

'It would surprise me very much,' said Maggie, with well-feigned amazement. As that nameless peril, so much the more dreadful, because it had not a name, drew nearer and nearer, her wits seemed to sharpen themselves for the conflict. The inspector's eyes, that had proved so keen in detecting the underground passage, were baffled by her incredulous face.

'Yet such,' he went on, 'I do assure you, madam, is the case. I could prove it to you—did I not think it injudicious to call the attention of others to the fact—at this moment?'

Should she tell him that what he had told her was no news? Should she confess to him that she was aware of the secret passage, and that her husband used it for the purpose he had suggested?

Would it be for John's advantage, with reference to the dark and unknown future that lay before him, to make a pitiful appeal to this man's generosity, and ask him to keep her husband's shame a secret? Perhaps it might be so; yet her mind revolted from representing John as a drunkard and a hypocrite, even though such an admission might strengthen the one strand of hope, to which, in case of the worst, she had to cling—the theory of his mental derangement.

'Whatever you may have discovered,' said she, after a moment's pause, 'would not alter the experience of years, or place it in a new light before me. My husband's ruin may for the time have given way, or deserted him—that is, indeed, the only possible explanation to me of what has happened—but that was never brought about by drink.'

The inspector looked puzzled and disappointed: he had made a discovery, and built a theory upon it; and it was hard to see the latter fall to pieces; but he acknowledged to himself that it had done so.

The discovery, however, still remained for a foundation to build something else upon.

'You have never heard, I suppose, that Mr Milbank had any personal enemy?'

'O no. He went but little into society, and, consequently, knew but very few people. With those he did know, however, he was on most cordial terms. His workpeople to a man, also, I have always understood, held him in great respect.'

Maggie had had this answer cut and dried, and laid up in store from the first, in order to meet that very question. She felt that this man would put it to her sooner or later, and that it was the most momentous of all. The inspector, as she guessed, had as yet but two alternatives in his mind respecting that possible catastrophe, which, with every hour, was becoming more probable. The missing man had either done some mischief to himself, or a mischief had befallen him at the hands of another; and this second idea it was essential to dispel, lest it should suggest to him a third—the conviction of Maggie's own mind—that her husband had done mischief to another man, and had fled from the consequences thereof. In this, thanks to the readiness and confidence of her last reply, it seemed she had succeeded: the inspector closed his note-book with something like a sigh,

as though all his ingenious theories had come to nothing; and, with an assurance that no effort should be wanting upon his part, nor on that of his assistants, to prosecute the search after her husband, and dispel the mystery by which his disappearance was surrounded, he respectfully took his leave.

The relief which Maggie experienced upon the withdrawal of the police official was great and twofold. The examination was over, which had cost her so much to undergo, and, upon the whole, it had ended satisfactorily. With the instinct of a bird whose young are threatened by some roving school-boy, and who pretends, by flitting from bough to bough on some distant tree, with pitiful cries, that her nest is elsewhere than it is, she had contrived to throw this human beagle off the scent; and she was now at liberty, alone, and free from prying eyes, to put into effect, what the inspector had taken for granted had been already done, the examination of her husband's desk. There it stood, just as he had left it, not forty-eight hours ago, with the key in it, and a bunch of keys depending from it, among them, that of the house and of the office; a fact which itself had seemed to indicate to her that he had done with both, and would never cross the threshold of either again. Her trembling touch had already discovered it was locked; but that was no sign that John had meant it to remain unopened, a very Bluebeard's chamber, from herself, but was more likely a slight precaution against meddling curiosity. Still she hesitated to turn the key. Her husband, it was true, except during this last unhappy week, had had no secrets from her, so far as she knew; but, by common consent, they had kept silence, save on those occasions with which we are acquainted, upon one subject, very near to both their hearts, and it was more than probable there lay within that desk some painful records with respect to it. There would, without doubt, be letters of Richard's—some, perhaps, breathing anything but brotherly love; memoranda of his debts, and, generally, evidences of his bad behaviour. In that supreme moment of anxiety and suspense, it curiously flashed upon her, that her father's invention of the 'terminable ink' would, in such a case, be an inestimable blessing. If all the letters that have been written from brother to brother, in scorn and hatred, since the world began, could have been so indited—if written words did not remain to add fuel to the flame of wrath, whenever the eye reverted to them, but became a harmless blank, what ill-blood would have been spared to poor humanity! It would be a dreadful thing to come upon some insolent, defiant, ungrateful letter of poor, misled Richard's, now. Thus she pictured the matter to herself, as she stood with one hand upon the lid, and the other on the key; but in reality her indecision was owing to the more substantial fear, that she might find the very thing she sought. The pain of a diseased limb is hard to bear, and, in the end, unless removed, must needs become intolerable; but when the moment of amputation comes, the patient shrinks from it, though he knows the thing must be, and will, eventually, bring relief; and distressing as Maggie's present condition was, it seemed, for the moment, preferable to a revelation which might be the confirmation of all her fears. And yet, how could that be, when, whatever she found, must needs have

been written before her husband left his home! Indeed, she now remembered, that on that last unhappy night, she had heard him unlock his desk—perhaps, nay, what was more likely—to set down his reasons for that very abandonment of her and home which was about to ensue. Here she opened the desk, with woman's haste, and threw back the lid; and the first thing her eye lit upon was a sealed paper, directed in a handwriting that, but for the terms of the address, she would not have recognised. Her husband's hand was singularly clear and clerkly, whereas each word lying before her now was ragged and ill-formed as her father's writing had been wont to be, when he began to recover from his paralysis. Yet there was no doubt whose fingers had penned them. *For my wife: to be opened when I am dead, or when she shall have lost faith in me.*

WONDERS OF THE YELLOWSTONE REGION.

WITHIN the last three years a wonderful portion of the earth's surface, of previously hidden and indeed almost unsuspected beauty, has been opened up, by the persevering efforts of a body of explorers, selected from among men of science and adventure in the United States of America. The Yellowstone Region in the Rocky Mountains is claimed by its explorers as superior to all the other wonders of the American continent; and it does, in reality, fulfil the most extravagant of the suppositions to which its concealed marvels gave rise, since the existence of a lake, which they hold to be the source of the great Yellowstone river, was established by the celebrated explorers, Captains Clarke and Lewis, in 1806. For more than sixty years these marvels were vaguely hinted at and surmised; rumours of burning plains, spouting springs, thickets of petrified sage brush, great lakes, and other natural wonders, came down from the unknown regions up the Yellowstone. But the mystery is a mystery no longer; and the official records of the United States government tell us what the brave men saw who penetrated to the valley, on whose south side are the Wind River Mountains, a snow-clad barrier which no white man has ever crossed; on whose eastern side is the Snowy Mountain Range, and a grand cluster of volcanic peaks; on whose north side are the Gallatin Range, and the vast parallel ridges through which the great tributaries of the Missouri pass northward.*

In 1870, some of the officials and leading citizens of the rich and beautiful state of Montana organised the expedition which, accompanied by a small escort of United States cavalry, started from Fort Ellis, the frontier military post of Montana, beyond which civilisation does not extend, and in thirty days explored the cañons of the Yellowstone and the shores of Yellowstone Lake; then crossing the mountains to the headwaters of the Madison, they visited the geyser regions of Firehole River, and ascended that stream to its junction with the Madison, along whose valley they returned to civilisation, confident that they had seen the greatest wonders on the continent, and convinced that there was not on the globe another region

where, within the same limits, nature had crowded so much of grandeur and majesty with so much of novelty and wonder.

This does not seem to be an exaggerated estimate of the scenes which revealed themselves to this and a second expedition which set out in the following year, led by Colonel Barlow, the chief engineer, and under special orders from General Sheridan; and starting, as the former expedition had done, from Fort Ellis, ascended Gardiner's River, and found themselves in a region of hot springs, the deposits from which cover the hillsides with quaint samples of natural architecture, forming a fitting introduction to the grander marvels of the valley. The deposit is snowy white, and has the form of a frozen cascade. The springs now in active operation cover an area of one square mile, while three or four miles are occupied by the remains of springs which have ceased to flow. These springs had been overlooked by the former exploring party, so that they were actually first discovered in 1871, and they have already become the resort of many invalids, who speak highly of the virtues of the waters. They are at a height of six thousand feet above the sea; and south of them rises a domelike mountain two thousand feet higher, whose summit commands a view of fifty miles in every direction. From this summit the party descended into the Yellowstone Valley, by a path which combines every variety of beauty, boldness, fertility, grandeur, and gloom; and includes an elevated plateau thirty miles in extent, dotted with groves of pine and aspen, with numerous beautiful little lakes scattered throughout its extent, and many springs, which flow down the slopes, and are lost in the vast volume of the Yellowstone. In their passage over this plateau the party came to a terrific rift—a preparation for the incomparable awfulness of the Grand Cañon, which lay before them—a rift two thousand feet in depth, with the river rolling in its deeps, over volcanic boulders, in some places; and in others, forming fathomless still pools. Small cascades tumble at different points from the rocky walls, and the river appears from the lofty summits a mere ribbon of foam in the immeasurable distance. 'Standing on the brink of the chasm,' writes one of the party, 'the heavy roaring of the imprisoned river comes to the ear only in a sort of hollow, hungry growl, scarcely audible from the depths. Everything beneath has a weird and deceptive appearance. The water does not look like water, but like oil. Numerous fish-hawks are seen busily plying their vocation, sailing high above the waters, and yet a thousand feet below the spectator. In the clefts of the rocks, hundreds of feet down, bald eagles have their eyries, from which one can see them swooping still farther into the depths, to rob the ospreys of their hard-earned trout.' A grand, gloomy, terrible place; peopled with fantastic ideas, full of shadows and of turmoil. At the head of this cañon is the beautiful entaract which the explorers called the Tower Falls, which, though its sheer fall is four hundred feet, is so hidden away in the dim light of overshadowing rocks and woods, its very voice hushed to a low murmur, that men might pass within half a mile of it, and not dream of its existence.

But not until the Grand Cañon is reached are the wonder and the dread of the region to be

* *Wonders of the Yellowstone Region in the Rocky Mountains; explored in 1871.* Edited by James Richardson. London and Edinburgh: Blackie and Son.

realised. Two of the explorers accomplished a descent into its fearful abyss at a point where the chasm is one thousand one hundred and ninety feet deep. Their ascent was most perilous, but the spectacle revealed to them was worth the risk. On entering the ravine, they came to hot springs of sulphur, sulphate of copper, alum, steam-jets in endless variety, some of them of very peculiar form. One of them, that of sulphur, had built up a tall spire, standing out from the slope of the wall like an enormous horn, with hot water trickling down its sides. They descended the channel of the creek for three miles, and were now one thousand five hundred feet below the brink, and after four hours of hard toil, reached the bottom of the gulf, and the margin of the Yellowstone, where they found the water warm, and tasting of alum and sulphur. The river-margin is lined with all kinds of chemical springs, some depositing craters of calcareous rock, others muddy, black, blue, or reddish water. 'The internal heat,' says Lieutenant Doane, 'renders the atmosphere oppressive, though a strong breeze drives through the cañon. A frying sound comes constantly to the ear, mingled with the rush of the current. We had come down the ravine at least four miles, and looking upward, the fearful wall appeared to reach the sky. It was 3 P.M. and stars could be distinctly seen, so much of the sunlight was cut off from entering the chasm. Tall pines on the extreme verge appeared the height of two or three feet. The total depth is probably three thousand feet. There are perhaps other cañons longer and deeper than this one, but surely none combining grandeur and immensity with such peculiarity of formation and profusion of volcanic or chemical phenomena.' The geologist of the party, Dr Hayden, thus reads the history of this tremendous chasm: 'Ages ago, this whole region was the basin of an immense lake. Then it became a centre of volcanic activity; a vast quantity of lava was erupted, which, cooling under water, took the form of basalt; volumes of volcanic ash and rock fragments were thrown out of the craters from time to time, forming breccia as it sunk through the water and mingled with the deposits from silicious springs. Over this were spread the later deposits from the waters of the old lake. In time the country was slowly elevated, and the lake was drained away. The easily eroded breccia along the river-channel was cut out deeper and deeper as the ages passed; while springs, and creeks, and the falling rain combined to carve the sides of the cañon into the fantastic forms they now present, by wearing away the softer rock, and leaving the hard basalt and the firmer hot spring deposits standing in massive columns and Gothic pinnacles. The basis material of the old hot spring deposits in silica, originally white as snow, are now stained by mineral waters with every shade of red and yellow—from scarlet to rose colour, from bright sulphur to the faintest tint of cream. When the light falls on these blended tints, the Grand Cañon presents a more enchanting and bewildering variety of forms and colours than human artist ever conceived.'

Awful as it is to look upwards from the depths of the Grand Cañon, it is infinitely more so to gaze downwards from its terrific verge. From the silent horror of the effort, the strong brave men of the exploring party shrank in agony, crawling

backward from the edge in undisguised terror, and hardly able to realise their safety.

The grandeur of the cañon is at once heightened and diversified by the magnitude and beauty of its Upper and Lower Falls; the latter are especially striking. The sheet of water falls sheer three hundred and fifty feet (with a like height of terrible wall rising above it), in one unbroken symmetrical expanse, covered with white foam, while rainbows are formed in the spray from almost every point of view; and the steep rocks near, constantly wet with rising mist, are covered with bright green vegetation. Between these beautiful falls and the lake, which is the central gem of that wonderful collection of long-hidden treasures, lies a marvellous region, filled with boiling springs and craters, with two hills, three hundred feet high, formed wholly of the sinter thrown from the adjacent springs; and at the base of one of them is a cavern whose mouth is seven feet in diameter, from whence a dense jet of sulphurous vapour explodes with a regular report like a high-pressure engine. A few yards off is a boiling spring, seventy feet long by forty wide, the water of which is in unceasing agitation; and in another direction is a boiling alum spring, surrounded with beautiful crystals. No wonder that the first beholders of these things called the various points by names of infernal significance. There are now no true geysers in this group, but in ancient times there were very powerful ones. The steam-vents on the side, and at the foot of these hills, represent the dying stages of this once most active group; but the real geyser region is just over the margin of the Yellowstone Basin, on the Firehole River. Here, in a valley twelve miles long and three wide, is an exhibition of boiling and spouting springs, on a scale so stupendous that if all the corresponding phenomena of all the rest of the world could be brought into an equal area, the display could not be equalled. The boiling springs, all in active eruption, with craters from three to forty feet high, are scattered along both banks of the river; and as the expedition hurried along, anxious to reach the settlements of Madison Valley, which formed the outposts of civilisation on the opposite side, they came in sight of an immense volume of clear, sparkling water, projected into the air to the height of one hundred and twenty-five feet. 'Geysers, geysers!' they shouted in concert; and so they were, this one standing as a sentinel at the mouth of the marvel-filled valley. It spouted at regular intervals nine times during the explorers' stay, the columns of boiling water being thrown from ninety to one hundred and twenty-five feet at each discharge, which lasted from fifteen to twenty minutes. By a succession of impulses, it seemed to hold the column up steadily in the air for the regular space, the great mass falling directly back into the basin, and flowing over the edges and down the sides in large streams. When the action ceases, the water recedes beyond sight, and nothing is heard but the occasional escape of steam until another exhibition occurs. The description of one of the geysers, of which there are hundreds, suffices for all, as to general features, but the difference in their dimensions is considerable, and the mounds and projecting rims are of various, though always extraordinary beauty. Of one, which they called the Castle Geyser, Dr Hayden writes: 'It is the most imposing formation in the valley, and

receives its name from its resemblance to the ruins of an old fortress. The deposited silica has crystallised in immense globular masses, like cauliflower, or spongiform corals, apparently formed about a nucleus at right angles to the centre. The mound is forty, and the chimney twenty feet high, and the lower portion rises in steps formed of thin laminae of silica, an inch or two thick. The base of the crater is three hundred and twenty-five feet in circumference, and the turret is one hundred and twenty-five. At the base of the turret lies a large petrified pine-log, covered with a brilliant incrustation several inches thick.

The Grand Geyser is the finest object of the kind yet discovered in the world; and the variety of these wonderful things is astonishing. Their number is not less than fifteen hundred, but scarcely any two are alike. The explorers' suspicion that many quiet-looking springs were slumbering geysers, was justified by a magnificent surprise. Their camp was roused in the early morning by a fearful hissing sound, and the rush of falling water; and, on looking out, they saw a small crater, three feet in height, with an opening twenty-six inches in diameter, which had hardly excited any notice, playing a perpendicular jet to the height of two hundred and nineteen feet, amid great clouds of steam, and causing the ground to tremble as the heavy body of water fell with tremendous splashes upon the shelly strata below. Huge masses of rock were torn from their places, and borne away into the river-channel. It played steadily for ten minutes. The excitement and pleasure of exploring such scenes as those presented by the Upper and Lower Geyser Basins of the Firehole River cannot be exaggerated in imagination. Every moment brought some fresh wonder to light, every hour chronicled a surprise, frequently mingled with awe. The mighty ranges of mountains, the tremendous ravines, the awful evidences of the rule of the Fire King (his power slumbering now, indeed, but still asserted in the geysers and the mud volcanoes, and the impress of his terrible passage, in the dead ages, on the face of nature everywhere around); the beautiful rivers, the far-spreading forests, with their noble denizens—elk, buffalo, and deer; the pine-crowned promontories, and the fair table-lands, which unite to form the exquisite picture of this remote region, six thousand feet above the sea-level, and dating from the Pliocene age, is but the setting of the gem which sparkles on the summit of it all, seven thousand four hundred and twenty-seven feet above the ocean—the peerless Yellowstone Lake, the 'Crown of the Continent.' When the explorers had seen all, it was this they had come to see; this was the prize, the treasure, the crowning reward—this loveliest sheet of water, which had lain, unseen by any save Indian eyes, and but rarely seen even by them, under the blue heavens from the morning of Time, mirroring their beauties in its expanse of fifteen miles by twenty-two.

Overpowering, indeed, must have been the effect upon the explorers when they emerged from the geyser region, the cañons and the falls, upon the beautiful lake, of which the engineer-in-chief writes: 'Secluded amid the loftiest peaks of the Rocky Mountains, possessing strange peculiarities of form and beauty, this watery solitude is one of the most attractive natural objects in the world.

Its southern shore, indented with long narrow inlets, not unlike the frequent fiords of Iceland, bears testimony to the awful upheaval and tumultuous force of the elements which resulted in its creation. The long pine-crowned promontories, stretching into it from the base of the hills, lend new and charming features to an aquatic scene full of novelty and splendour. Islands of emerald hue dot its surface, and a margin of sparkling sand forms its jewelled setting. The winds, compressed in their passage through the mountain gorges, lash it into a sea as terrible as the fretted ocean, covering it with foam.' But it lay before the explorers, when they saw it first, calm and unruffled, the most beautiful object which their toilsome journey had revealed. No fish save trout live in its waters, but they are thronged with waterfowl; great fleets of white swans and pelican sail over its bosom, and crowd its islets. The great river flows away from it in a deep and easy channel, a quarter of a mile wide; its superficial area is three hundred square miles, and in elevation it has but one rival, the South American lake, Titicaca.

Such is, in brief outline, the Yellowstone Region, latest won of the prizes of modern enterprise and intrepidity, and which is to be legally set apart as a great national park or pleasure-ground. The scheme is already in working order; and, no doubt, in a few years, parties to the Yellowstone will be as common as trips to Saratoga, for the Americans; and Mr Cook will be contracting for tours in the new wonderland, on behalf of his English clients.

DENNY'S INTENTIONS.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

'NEVER mind the bishops!' cried Charlie impatiently; 'what have they to do with me?'

'Don't be so impatient, Blake; I'm just going to tell you. Old Denny's lease was a lease for lives—for three lives. About fifteen years ago, one of the lives fell in, and Denny, according to custom renewed his lease by inserting another life, paying a couple of hundred pounds to the bishop. And that life was yours, Charlie.'

'Still I don't see.'

'You will in a minute. When the next life falls in, the old bishop is dead, and Denny, when he goes to renew, instead of dealing with old Bob at Bincaster, has to go to a sharp clever lawyer in Westminster. Renew his lease! Bless you, he laughs at him. It must run out, he says, and then they will deal with the case on its merits. Well, that was a terrible blow for poor Denny, who had always looked on that farm as his freehold. He didn't come to me, but he went to some lawyer in London, and consulted him, and found he could do nothing. Almost immediately after that, his second life dropped; and thus your life, don't you see, becomes his only holdfast? That accounts, you'll observe, for his sudden increase of interest in your welfare. I ought to have guessed,' said Hutton, striking his hand on the arm of his chair, 'when I saw old Denny, with the tears in his eyes, begging of me to try and stop you from going abroad to risk your life in the tropics, and to give you a chance of settling here, where he could keep his eye upon you, and watch the growth of your character! Hang it! I ought to have known that Denny would

never have shed tears over anything but the loss of his money.'

'And that's the reason you offered me a seat in your office?'

'That, and no other. I don't mind telling you I was under considerable obligations to Denny at that moment. He'd a very large sum in our bank, and if he'd withdrawn it just then, we should have been rather pressed. And then, Blake, I must say that I was very glad to have an opportunity of serving you.'

'You're very kind.'

'Oh, of course, I had a motive; it wasn't likely I should give you seventy-five pounds a year—and really, Blake, you're very little use to me—unless I'd had a motive. Well, old Denny has humbugged us both, and we must begin again on a different footing. You must put your shoulder to the wheel, Blake, and try again. It's no use your stopping with me; I couldn't afford to keep you, and there's no prospect before you.'

'Of course, I wouldn't stop with you after what I have heard,' said Charlie slowly. 'I'm obliged to you for speaking out so plainly. It isn't a pleasant thing being humbugged. I shan't trouble you again, I assure you, Mr Hutton. Good-bye. I daresay you'll send Mary home.'

'Oh, nonsense! Stop, and have supper, and so on.'

But Charlie had already disappeared in the shrubbery; Hutton heard the branches cracking, and then a footstep on the path leading to the river.

Hutton listened intently for a while, but heard nothing more.

'He won't go and do anything foolish, I should think. Well, it's no business of mine. It's precious lucky I found it all out before Fanny and he came to an understanding.'

'What have you done with Charlie?' said Mary Blake, as Mr Hutton entered his drawing-room, blinking and winking at the brightness of the light, in contrast to the dark summer-house.

'Oh, Charlie's gone home, I fancy,' said Hutton. 'He had a headache, I think, didn't feel very well.'

Fanny looked uneasily at her father.

'I think I'd better go home too,' said Mary, rising from her chair a little alarmed: perhaps Charlie really had been hurt by the upset, and was now feeling it.

'Oh, don't go, don't go,' said Hutton. 'There's nothing the matter with Charles, to take you home. Ellis shall put the old mare in the dog-cart, and drive you home by-and-bye. I want a rubber, and if you go away, I shan't get one. Oh, I've always got a motive. Selfish fellows we lawyers, aren't we?'

'It's all right,' whispered Fanny in Mary's ear, as she went to get out the card-table: 'Charlie and the governor have had a little bit of a tiff, I fancy, but it will blow over.'

Nevertheless, the whist was not successful. Tom was Mary's partner, and they both played shamefully. Fanny seemed in a sort of maze, constantly played false cards, and forgot all about the trumps. Hutton pished and pshawed, and finally threw down his cards—they were very bad ones—and vowed he wouldn't play with such a set of people. At that moment a servant came in and announced that Mr Denny was waiting in the hall to speak to Mr Hutton on business of great importance.

Hutton went down-stairs grumbling at being disturbed.

'Oh, Mr Hutton, where is he, how is he?' cried Denny, who seemed to be in a state of the utmost anxiety. 'Is he dead? Tell me the worst at once. I can bear it; only tell me.'

'Whom do you mean?'

'Blake!—young Blake!'

'Why, he's as well as ever he was, I expect. Suffers from nothing but consumption of victuals.'

'When did you see him? Quick! when did you see him?'

'Half an hour ago—in the garden here.'

'Heaven be praised!' cried Denny, sinking into a chair, and clasping his hands. 'He wasn't hurt, then?'

'Hurt! Why should he be hurt?'

'O dear, my carter brought me home such a tale! He'd been for a load of roots to Farmer Rogers, and when he was there, a boy came in with such a lamentable story! He'd seen Mr Tom driving in his dog-cart, and Mr Blake with him, and Miss Fanny; and all of a sudden the horse twisted round, and they were all pitched out, and smashed almost to pieces. I didn't hear it till just now, and then I ran up as fast as ever I could. But he's safe, you say? Oh, I'm so thankful, Mr Hutton; and yet I had a sort of confidence in all my trouble, sir; I thought the Lord wouldn't desert me after all these years.'

'You don't ask after Fanny and Tom, then,' said Hutton grimly.

'O dear me, yes; I ought to have mentioned them. They ben't hurt, though, be they, Mr Hutton? Perhaps 'twas all a lie my carter told me.'

'I have heard nothing at all about it; but I'll go up-stairs and ask.'

'Tom,' he said, putting his head into the drawing-room, 'have you had a spill to-day?'

'A bit of one, father,' said Tom, looking rather sheepish: 'the chestnut bolted—wild little beggar.'

'Did she cut herself at all?'

'No, father.'

'Any damage to the harness or dog-cart?'

'Not a bit; only Fanny and Charlie pitched out into the hedge.'

'You should have told me about it, Tom; but, it's well it's no worse.' Hutton went down to Denny again.

'It seems there was a bit of a spill,' he said; 'nothing serious: young Blake was pitched out, but—Come in here, Denny,' he cried, opening the dining-room door, 'and have a glass of grog.'

Denny, although a very abstemious man, never objected to a stimulus at somebody else's expense. He followed Hutton into the dining-room, and took his seat in an easy-chair, whilst Hutton busied himself at the buffet in mixing him some spirits and water.

'I'm very much obliged to you, Denny,' said Hutton, 'for putting me right about your intentions with respect to Blake. I'd got it into my head you meant to make him your heir, and so had he; for what do you think he'd the impudence to ask me to-night?—why, for leave to pay his addresses to my daughter Fanny!'

'And what did you say to him?—what did you tell him?' cried Denny, breathless with anxiety.

'Why, that I wondered at his impudence. A fellow without a penny, and never likely to have

one. My word, he opened his eyes when I told him your intentions about him.'

'What!' cried Denny, jumping to his feet: 'you didn't tell him that? O Hutton, you're a fool, fool, fool! He'll go away to Africa now, and I shall lose my farm. O dear, O dear! Where is he, Hutton? Where is he now?'

'I don't know; he left me when I told him that—bolted off towards the river.'

'Towards the river!' screamed Denny. 'Why didn't you stop him? Don't you see?—are you a fool?—he loses his gal and his expectations all at a blow; and he goes and throws himself into the river! O dear, O dear, O dear, it's all over with me now! I shall never get over the loss of the Manor farm.'

Hutton looked at him doubtfully. Certainly Charlie Blake had had more than one misfortune that night; and what Denny had suggested had occurred to him as possible, in a sort of inert, uneasy thought; but after all it was no business of his. Denny was interested in the matter. Let him look to it.

'There's none of you care for him like me,' said Denny, looking reproachfully at Hutton; 'although you pretend to be his friends—driving him to despair like that. Hutton, if anything has happened to him, I shall look to you to make it good!'

'You may look as long as you like,' said Hutton, with a sneering laugh. 'What nonsense you talk, Denny, as if a fellow would go and throw himself in the water for nothing.'

'Ah! you haven't studied him as I have,' cried Denny; 'don't you tell me about him. Come, I'll go and look after him myself, and won't trouble any of his fine friends; only tell me the way he went.'

Hutton directed him to cross the shrubbery, and make his way out of a little iron wicket, which opened on a field-path leading to the river-bank. 'Depend upon it, he's safe at home by this time,' said Hutton, letting him out of the hall-door.

'He's not at home, I tell you,' cried Denny. 'If anything has happened to that young man, I shall blame you.'

The night was clear and moonlit, and the river could be seen from the iron wicket, winding through the river-valley in many a curl and fold. There was no one visible along the river-banks. A few cows were lying on the grass by the river; a horse was standing by the railings in a sort of half-doze, bats flitted about, and sometimes a frog lazily croaked from the ditch. But there was no other sign of life. Denny marched along till he came to the river-bed, and looked carefully up and down the stream.

But as he stood looking here and there, expecting he hardly knew what, he heard a sound that seemed like a suppressed groan, and turning hastily round, he saw, under the raised embankment of the bridge that carried the road over the river, a figure lying, still and motionless. Denny turned quite faint and shivery, and made his way quickly to the spot.

When Charlie left Mr Hutton, he felt a great lump in his throat, and a sensation of trouble and oppression all over him. He had been altogether humiliated and put to shame. He had found that the only value attached to him was as a sort of animated title-deed; that he had not only been deceived, but made a fool of; that he would be a

laughing-stock for everybody. At one blow, all his hopes had been destroyed, all his self-respect. It was a very bitter thing this for him to thole. All kinds of mad revengeful thoughts rose within him. He would go and do something desperate. It was better to be infamous than ridiculous. But as he came to the river-brink, the stillness and quiet of the night, and the beauty of the scene around him, came upon him with tranquillising and soothing effect. There were many things, after all, of which no misfortune could deprive him. He sat down by the river-brink and began to smoke a pipe, but finding that the night-breeze swept chillily along the river-side, he took shelter under the bank that carried the road up to the level of the bridge, and began to chew the cud of bitter regretful thought.

The night was so still and tranquil that he had no desire to seek the shelter of a roof. It was better to lie there in the open, watching the twinkling stars, and the gleam of the moon on the ripples, than to sit and stew over his troubles in the dull solitude of his room. But after a while he got quite chilly and benumbed, and thought of starting homewards, when he heard a footstep approaching, and saw in the bright moonlight the gaunt form of Denny coming down the path towards the river. He watched him, wondering what the old man could be doing down here at night, and he wondered still more when he saw him groping and peering among the rushes. But in a moment it struck him—Denny had come down from the Limes; he had been to see Hutton! The two old rascals had put their heads together, and Denny had heard of his rejection. And he thought that he, Charlie, had thrown himself into the river!

The idea of the old fellow's trouble and perplexity amused the lad greatly; and it struck him too, what a wonderful pull he had upon him, in his selfish dread of losing sight of his Charlie and his lease together.

'Is he asleep, or is he—oh, he cannot be!—dead?' whispered Denny to himself, as he stooped down and touched Charlie on the shoulder. At this, Charlie began to revive, stretched himself out, gave a groan or two, and turned on his elbow.

'That's right, my dear lad. Oh, you're coming on finely. You remember me—Denny, your good friend?'

'Friend!' said Charlie, with another groan; 'I have no friends!'

'O yes, you have: there's me—there's Denny! Never mind what that rascal Hutton told you; it was all a lie. I'm more your friend than ever, Charlie. Rouse up, my dear lad, rouse up. You shall have your gal, and everything shall be all right, if you'll only speak to me.'

'It's too late,' said Charlie wildly, springing to his feet, and staggering off towards the river—it's too late now.'

Denny panted after him. 'Stop, Charlie, stop! What's the matter? You haven't taken poison, have you?' he cried shrilly, as the agonising thought struck him. 'O dear, O dear, O dear! You shall have stomach-pumps, mustard and water, everything, if you'll only tell me. Have you taken poison, Charlie, my boy?'

'I tell you, it's too late,' gasped Charlie; 'I must drown my misery and tortures in the weir;' and he set off at a trot along the river-bank.

'To the weir!' shrieked Denny, shambling after

him. 'Charlie, stop! O Charlie, for my sake, for my sake!'

The noise of falling waters was now plainly to be heard, and in a few moments they came to a broad sweep of greensward, where there was a steep embankment of stone, and a swirling pool of dark waters striped with foam.

Charlie stopped here, and folding his arms on his chest, confronted Denny with haggard stare.

'It's no good saying anything to me,' he said; 'I have made up my mind. Leave me alone, or prepare to share my fate.'

There was a painful pause, and then an altercation. Denny was successful in persuading Charlie to desist from his intention. 'There's nobody in the world,' he said, 'I care about but you. Let us leave that nasty pond; come this way, come this way! I'll make my will to-morrow, Charlie; and you shall have everything—everything!'

Charlie consented to live on these terms, and finally saw old Denny home to the Manor farm; for the poor man was quite knocked up with the efforts and troubles of the night. Then he made his way home, making the woods ring with his laughter.

A FINE SENTIMENT FINELY EXPRESSED.

Among the sentiments expressed by Mr Froude in his work, *The English in Ireland*, we find the following on 'Liberty,' which it would be well for many to take seriously to heart; for on almost no subject is there more vague or incorrect opinion.

'There is no word in human language which so charms the ear as liberty. There is no word which so little pains have been taken to define, or which is used to express ideas more opposite. There is a liberty which is the liberty of a child or a savage, the liberty of animals, the vagrant liberty, which obeys no restraint, for it is conscious of no obligation. There is a liberty which arises from the subjugation of self and the control of circumstances, which consists in knowledge of what ought to be done, and a power to do it obtained by patient labour and discipline. The artisan or the artist learns in an apprenticeship under the guidance of others to conquer the difficulties of his profession. When the conquest is complete he is free. He has liberty—he commands his tools, he commands his own faculties. He has become a master. It is with life as a whole, as with the occupations into which life is divided. Those only are free men who have had patience to learn the conditions of a useful and honourable existence, who have overcome their own ignorance and their own selfishness, who have become masters of themselves. The first liberty is the liberty of anarchy, which to a man should be a supreme object of detestation. The second liberty is the liberty of law, which has made the name the symbol of honour, and has made the thing the supreme object of desire. But the enthusiasm for true liberty has in these modern times been transferred to its opposite. With a singular inversion of cause and effect, men have seen in liberty not the exercise and the reward of virtues which have been acquired under restraint, but some natural fountain, a draught from which is to operate as a spell for the regeneration of our nature. Freedom as they picture it to themselves is like air and light, a condition in which the seeds of excellence

are alone able to germinate. Who is free? asked the ancient sage, and he answered his own question. The wise man who is master of himself. Who is free? asks the modern liberal politician, and he answers, the man who has a voice in making the laws which he is expected to obey. Does the freedom of a painter consist in his having himself consented to the laws of perspective, and light and shade? That nation is the most free where the laws, by whomsoever framed, correspond most nearly to the will of the Maker of the universe, by whom, and not by human suffrage, the code of rules is laid down for our obedience. That nation is most a slave which has ceased to believe that such divinely appointed laws exist, and will only be bound by the Acts which it places on its statute-book.'

MAY BLOSSOMS.

HARK! how rejoicingly the rivers flow;
Sunshine and May have met!
Welcome to May! her hand hath touched each
bough,
And 'mid green leaves, like pearls upon her brow,
Young hawthorn buds are set;
Through the dim woods her dew-bathed feet have
trod,
And left flower-prints upon the mossy sod.

On dale and upland a warm radiance lies
All through the golden hours;
Leaf-traceried elms and feathery lindens rise
In stately columns to the glowing skies,
Thick with their honeyed flowers;
And the dark chestnut lifts against the light
Pyramids of blossom, rose-tinged or white.

Round ancient manse and grange with lichens hoar,
The sweet May-flowers are bright,
And little children from each cottage door
Forth to the daisied fields in glad troops pour,
Till with the closing night,
Homeward they wend through the soft gathering
gloom,
Baskets and hands o'er-filled with meadow-bloom.

By briar-tangled copse and lone lagoon,
The flower-boy wanders now,
Humming the while some quaint half-drowsy tune;
Twisted oak-branches from the sultry noon
Shelter his sunburnt brow;
And blue-bells quiver where his footsteps pass
Through last year's withered leaves and waving
grass.

In green-old forests with their sun-flecked floors,
Shadows of beauty dwell;
By many a silent tarn's untrodden shores
Her boat of pearl, the water-lily, moves;
And the low breezes swell
In whispers faint, along the thymy lea,
Bearing the heath-flower's fragrance as they flee.

And it is pleasant on the turf to lie,
Beside clear prattling streams,
Beneath the silver-clouded soft spring sky;
Filling the shadows of futurity
With Hope's air-woven dreams—
Dreams more beautiful than buds of May,
And fading in their glory e'en as they.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.
Also sold by all Booksellers.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 543.

SATURDAY, MAY 23, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

STORY OF THE KEITHS.

And I'll be Lady Keith again,
The day our king comes over the water.

SUCH are a couple of lines in a characteristic Jacobite ballad which Lady Keith is supposed to hopefully sing on the possible restoration of the dynasty that would replace her family in their ancient dignity and possessions. Attainder for accession to the rebellion of 1715, had ruined everything. The eldest son of a widowed mother, a youth of great promise, had forfeited patrimonial title and estates, and the only other son had been dragged into the general ruin. From affluence, the mother was reduced to obscurity, but sitting in her 'wee croo house,' spinning with the rock and reel, and sore at heart, she still derived some consolation that the cause her family had espoused might, after all, triumph, and that she and her sons would be restored to their original position. The ballad purports to have been composed by Lady Keith herself; but it is more probably the composition of James Hogg, in whose collection it first appeared; its very beauty as a pathetic effusion suggesting its authorship. The plaintive air to which it is set resembles that of *The Boyne Water*. We propose to say something of the Keiths, and the domains of which they were dispossessed.

In sailing northwards along the coast of Kincardineshire, at a point where the land projects boldly into the German Ocean, some miles before arriving at the thriving town of Peterhead, we come in front of a dilapidated fortress, roofless and deserted, occupying the broad summit of a rocky eminence, and more like the ruins of a town, than a dismantled fendal stronghold. Such is Dunnottar Castle, a place famed in history, an old inheritance of the Keiths, and now only a resort for the screaming sea-mews which hover wildly about the cliffs. Like many other families of distinction in Scotland, the Keiths came into notice through military achievements. First, we hear of a Sir Robert Keith, for an exploit of this kind, being appointed hereditary Grand Marischal of Scotland; and in 1458,

his descendant, Sir William Keith, was created Earl Marischal and Lord Keith. By-and-by, the originally small possessions of the family were swelled out to a magnificent scale, by marriage; the bulk of the property being situated in Kincardine, Aberdeen, Banff, and some other northern counties. At the close of the seventeenth century, the family, with its headquarters at Dunnottar, was at the height of its glory. George, the fifth earl, taking a deep interest in the advancement of learning in the north, founded Marischal College, Aberdeen, 1593, and munificently endowed it as a university. This fact, which stands finely and uniquely out in the annals of the Scottish peerage, has, as may be supposed, permanently hallowed the fame of the Keiths Earls Marischal. As an accessible centre of learning, the Marischal College (now merged in the University of Aberdeen) has amply realised the wishes of its founder, and remains a diffusive blessing in the northern part of the kingdom.

The Keith Earl Marischal who flourished in the reign of Queen Anne, appears to have somewhat impaired the fortunes of the family by his magnificent style of living, and to have done his reputation little good by obstinately, and, as he thought, patriotically, protesting against the Act of Union. Despite his remonstrances, this salutary measure was carried, and henceforth he sinks into obscurity and dies, leaving a widow, Countess Keith, the songstress of the ballad, and two sons, George and James. There is some reason to think, that the misfortune into which the young men were plunged was in no small degree owing to their mother's uncompromising Jacobite proclivities. Of high birth, she had high notions of loyalty to the Stewarts, whose mad pranks in the person of James II. had forfeited the crown, never more to be recovered. The son of that infatuated monarch, the titular James III. dreamt, however, of regaining the lost inheritance, and made an attempt to do so in 1715; so adding one more act of folly to a long catalogue of family blunders. Such was the rebellion got up under the Earl of Mar, and into which the countess enthusiastically thrust

her two sons; the eldest, George Earl Marischal, being at the time only twenty-two years of age. At the battle of Sheriffmuir, the two brothers had each the command of a squadron. Rather tardily, James arrived from France, and tried to revive the drooping hopes of his party, by marching southwards from Peterhead, taking with him Earl Marischal, who rode on his left hand in entering Dundee. As history tells, it was altogether an ill-managed affair. James was glad to quit the country. His adherents were scattered; Earl Marischal and his brother fled to the continent; the title and estates were forfeited. The countess, a primary cause of the family ruination, remained in Scotland in some comparatively obscure way—'sad and sabbing,' but with an undaunted a spirit as ever. If there be any truth in the ballad, it was fortunate she could console herself with a song for the loss of an earldom; but this was a species of consolation to which the Jacobites of all ranks had a special aptitude. We leave her singing in her 'wee croo house,' to follow the fortunes of her two sons.

It would be difficult to say which of the exiled Keiths possessed the nobler nature or the sounder understanding. They had been well educated, and, but for the unfortunate political escapade, would have been distinguished ornaments of society in their native country. To Britain they were lost. The terrible reverse they had undergone transformed them into foreigners. We hear of them as playing an important rôle in France, Spain, Germany, Russia, growing gray in the service of one country or other, admired and honoured for their ability and uprightness. Never was there a reproach on the Keiths. In England, there were regrets that men so estimable had by circumstances been wafted so egregiously out of their proper sphere.

In telling the story of the two brothers, we must at times speak of them separately; for they did not remain together, and it happened that George, the elder, was the survivor. Arriving in Paris, in May 1716, their prospects were sufficiently dreary. James, who wrote a fragment of his autobiography, says that, for a time, he lived by 'selling horse-furniture, and other things of that nature which an officer commonly carries with him; and though I had relations enough in Paris who could have supplied me, and who would have done it with pleasure, yet I was then either so bashful, or so vain, that I would not own the want I was in.' In this semi-destitute condition, the two brothers were induced to go to Spain, and take part in a fresh expedition to recover the British crown for the Stewarts. This was the ill-fated attempt of 1719. Landing at Stornoway, and crossing to Loch Duich in the mainland, the party were signally defeated at Glenshiel; the Spanish troops concerned in the affair being taken prisoners of war. With some difficulty and hair-breadth escapes, the two Keiths got safely back to the continent. For some years, James led a wandering life, dependent on the good offices of friends. As a soldier of fortune, and anxious for employment, he offered his services to Russia, and they were gladly accepted. This was about the year 1730, when Russia was making great efforts to improve and consolidate her naval and military system. As a brave and skilful general, Keith was appreciated for his services. But the business of encroaching on Polish and other

nationalities, was distasteful to his sense of justice, and after more than ten years of active military duty, he was fain to quit the Russian service, and in 1747 entered that of Frederick the Great, of Prussia. General James Keith was now in his proper element. By Frederick he was engaged in various important enterprises, and at length was raised to the dignity of a Field-marshal. The career of Marshal Keith was of no long duration. In the Seven Years' War, he performed brilliant acts of daring. Ordered to maintain a particular position, he was killed by a cannon-shot at the battle of Hochkirchen, in 1758.

The career of the elder brother, who is uniformly spoken of as Earl Marischal, was of a more peaceful character. He was engaged in various diplomatic missions, and esteemed for his urbanity and excellent business management. Though not relinquishing his original political bias, he declined to take any part in the insurrection of 1745. Perhaps he was aware, from what he knew, and what he saw behind the scenes in France, that the affair was hopeless; and it proved so. Like his brother, attaching himself to Frederick the Great, he was employed by him as ambassador to the court of France, and afterwards appointed governor of the canton of Neuchâtel in Switzerland. Settling down in a rural mansion at Colombier—still shewn to English tourists—he became acquainted with Rousseau, who was pleased with his sedate and simple manners; and a friendship sprung up between the two, of which some notice appears in Rousseau's *Confessions*. Relinquishing his governorship, Earl Marischal was appointed ambassador to Spain. While in that country, he had an opportunity of doing a piece of useful diplomatic service for England, which secured him the favour of the Earl of Chatham, through whose influence the act of attainder against him was reversed, 25th May 1759, and he could now return with safety to his native country. Recalled at his own request from Spain, he visited England, and was graciously received by George II., who gave him the right to draw the sum of three thousand six hundred and eighteen pounds, which was yet unpaid by the purchasers of his estates.

Here was an entire change of circumstances. The Earl Marischal had it now in his power to purchase back some of the properties of which his family had been bereft. He made excursions into Scotland, was received everywhere with tokens of respect and affection, and he actually bought some of the heritages that had belonged to his family. But after so long an absence from his original haunts, he felt himself as a visitor to a strange land. His mother, the songstress of the ballad, had passed away, without seeing a restoration of the family honours. Her anticipations that the king would 'come over the water,' and restore matters to their old condition, had lamentably failed. The sight of one of his castles in ruins affected him to tears. He could not make for himself a home even in the district where he was held in the highest esteem. The king of Prussia pressed him in eager terms to return. 'Come,' said he, 'to ease, to friendship, and philosophy; these are what, after the battle of life, we must all have recourse to.' He obeyed the summons; and to be near His Majesty, he was given a house adjoining the gardens of Sans Souci. At this charming spot, Earl Marischal Keith

reached the end of his earthly pilgrimage. He died serenely on the 28th May 1778.

Neither of the brothers had married. The circumstance of being a Protestant placed an insuperable bar to the Earl Marischal's alliance with a French lady, who subsequently, not without a pang of regret for the loss of 'dear Milord Maréchal,' became the wife of Monsieur de Créquy. It was not till many years afterwards, when Madame de Créquy had grandchildren, and Earl Marischal was in his seventieth year, that the two saw each other. What were their mutual sensations on beholding the changes that time had wrought? Keith presented her with some French verses on the beauty of white hairs, which he had written on purpose for the occasion. She wrote of the interview as follows: 'When we met again, after the lapse of many years, we made a discovery which equally surprised and affected us both. There is a world of difference between the love which had endured throughout a lifetime, and that which burned fiercely in our youth and then paused. In the latter case, time has not laid bare defects, nor taught the bitter lesson of mutual failings; a delusion has subsisted on both sides, which experience has destroyed; and delighting in the idea of each other's perfections, that thought has seemed to smile on both with inexpressible sweetness, till, when we meet in gray old age, feelings so tender, so pure, so solemn, arise, that they can be compared to no other sentiments or impressions of which our nature is capable.' What a pity that Madame de Créquy was so inexorably prevented from becoming the consort of 'Milord Maréchal,' and so probably perpetuating a lineage that sunk and was extinguished!

The admirer and munificent patron of the Keiths is seen to have been Frederick the Great. The loss of Field-marshal James Keith at the battle of Hochkirchen was deeply mourned by him, and he caused a characteristic figure of the marshal, in white marble, to be erected on a pedestal of red granite, to his memory in the Wilhelm Platz, Berlin. Here, the story of the monument does not end. The original figure in marble having suffered by exposure to the weather, was afterwards removed, and a figure in bronze was put in its place. Believing that the dismissed marble monument might be procured for Peterhead, a private individual in that town, in 1865, agitated the question. A communication from the town-council to the Prussian government ensued. The marble statue of Marshal Keith, like that of other heroes of the Seven Years' War, had been set up within the walls of the Military School of Berlin, and could not be withdrawn; but His Majesty the King (the present Emperor of Germany) had been pleased to order a fac-simile of the bronze monument to be prepared and despatched for the acceptance of the Peterhead authorities. The cast arrived safely October 1868, and, placed on a pedestal, adorns a place of public resort in Peterhead. The figure, in cocked-hat and military costume of the period, is peculiarly effective, and with its appropriate inscription, visibly reminds the inhabitants of an ancient family, who once owned an extensive inheritance in the district, and whose memory is still fondly cherished.

At the upbreak of the Earl Marischal's estates, consequent on the forfeiture, large portions were

purchased for redistribution by the York Buildings and other public companies. Among those to whom lands were thus subsequently disposed of, were the governors of the Merchant Maiden Hospital of Edinburgh—an institution for educating the daughters of merchants in decayed circumstances. Their purchases, which comprehended the estate of Peterhead, took place at several times beginning with 1728, at a united cost of £8814. But this was the smallest part of the outlay. Under the spirited direction of these new proprietors, acting as trustees, as much as the sum of £43,905 was first and last expended in improvements, raising the total outlay to nearly £53,000. In the course of time the rental has risen from a few hundreds of pounds to about £4400 per annum, while the valuation of the estate in 1861 was moderately estimated at £98,365—a striking, but far from unusual instance of what has been effected in raising the value of heritable property in Scotland, through sound administration, and a condition of settled peace and security. Could the Keiths have foreseen the vast educational benefits that were to be imparted by the Peterhead portion of their estates, they would have been satisfied that the old inheritance could not be devoted to more worthy, more publicly useful purposes. W. C.

THE FOOD OF INDIA.

'FIFTY millions of our fellow-subjects pass their lives in a chronic risk of starvation,' says the author of *Rural Bengal*. He asserts that the people in the rice districts of Orissa are 'perpetually on the verge of famine.' These are startling assertions; but with the fact of three famines in Bengal within ten years, none can venture to disprove them.

British rule in India may be said to have been inaugurated by one of the most terrible famines the world has known. But with the country and its people we were then comparatively unacquainted. The vast mountain-chains, extensive rivers, jungles, and fastnesses of India were unexplored; even its ancient cities and teeming population were but slightly known to us. Its products were traditional rather than tangible; and that the new rulers were unable to cope with that terrible famine of 1779 is not surprising. At least ten million perished. 'Bengal lay waste and silent for twenty years' afterwards, through utter prostration. This fact tells its effect upon the inhabitants, and explains that expression of habitual sadness and patient endurance seen on the face of the native Hindu of the poorer class, whose normal condition is one of 'depression and despondency.' And are rice-famines inevitable? many ask who, for several months, have read that the present famine in India was 'coming.' Those acquainted with rice-culture know the signs which foretell it; they know, also, that at least forty million of the inhabitants of India look to the rice-crops for their sole diet; that a good crop means plenty; an average crop, high prices; a failing crop, starvation.

Rice is to the intertropical nations of the East what wheat is to us, and oats and rye to the more northern countries. To the Hindus, whose religion forbids them flesh, it is more: it is their sacred food and sole subsistence. Not only this, for out of the intricacies of their creeds new difficulties arise. One caste refuses to touch food that another

caste has handled. They would eat what they themselves have raised; the rest is impure: thus, when their crops fail, many accept death in preference to that which their faith holds as unclean food.

Those who have lived in India are familiar with the sight of a Hindu family seated on the ground around a pan of boiled rice as big as a sponge-bath, helping themselves, and feeding with their fingers till the 'dish' is empty. Two such meals a day are what the working-classes subsist on. A little salt is frequently the only flavouring. Sugar, ghee, oil, and vegetables are luxuries in which they do not often indulge. One pound of rice at each of these two meals is what a man consumes on an average, though, in times of plenty, he seems to be able to go on swallowing rice as long as any remains in the dish. There is a standing joke against them, that they never know when they have eaten enough until they have measured themselves round the middle. A pound of rice swells into a bulk incredibly enormous for one stomach, we English would think. Not for a Hindu peasant; he finishes his meal with a good draught of water, and if, then, he have attained satisfactory dimensions, he decides that he has eaten enough. This is the ludicrous aspect of a simple custom, which, however, gives us some idea of what rice is in India to the many millions who eat nothing else.

We will glance at the mode of rice-culture pursued in India and in other countries, and leave it to the reader to account in some measure for the frequency of Bengal rice-famines.

Climate and cultivation have produced endless varieties of rice, which, as our readers are aware, somewhat resembles barley in its appearance, except that it has larger and thicker leaves, and a bearded, spiked panicle. Botanists recognise four or five species, of which only one is not aquatic; though that also is, to a certain extent, dependent on moisture. In fact, warmth, combined with abundant moisture, are the two great essentials for rice. Though the species most grown is called 'marsh rice,' swamps and marshes do not suit it so well as prepared localities, where water can be let in and drained off at pleasure; that is, by artificial irrigation. The produce in such lands is from five to ten times more than where the rains alone are depended upon. The low lands of South Carolina and Georgia, near the banks of the numerous rivers, but above the tide-water region, are admirably adapted to rice-culture. An elaborate system of irrigation by embankments and dikes has been adopted there; and the Carolina rice has for a long time been in high esteem for the size of its grain. Unfortunately, large tracts of the Carolina rice-lands were abandoned during the late war in America; and owing to the impoverished condition of the southern people, have since remained a wilderness; consequently, very little Carolina rice is now exported. Even at home it is dearer than imported rice; and as new enterprises are opening up to fresh settlers in the desolated districts, it is to be feared that many years must elapse before the rice-markets will be again supplied with it. The American crop is sown in spring, and reaped in August and September, and during its growth is flooded at regular intervals of time, remaining under water so many days or weeks as may be necessary, and then drained for weeding. It turns yellow like wheat when ripe,

and is reaped in the same way. Negro women then collect it in bundles; indeed, the negroes of the South were hitherto the chief labourers in the rice-fields. To them were allotted the tasks of planting and weeding; but very few negroes are now to be seen in the rice-fields of America. Rice is, however, more cultivated in other states now, and where less risk from malaria is to be feared. The mortality on the southern rice-lands used to be great. The white residents always quitted the vicinity before the summer.

The cultivation of rice has been attempted in England, but without success. It needs the power of the tropical sun to ripen it. Sir Joseph Banks tried the experiment, and even gave it the advantage of the hot-house, but the plants produced nothing but leaves. These, however, were in such abundance that Sir Joseph thought it worth cultivating for fodder, as the plants will bear a great degree of cold, notwithstanding the ripening grain requires the sun.

The importance of artificial irrigation has been recognised for ages in those countries where rice has been most unfailing. When we think that the consumption of rice in China is at the rate of half an acre for each person, we can, in some degree, estimate the vast tracts of land and immense labour bestowed on rice-culture to feed its 400 millions of people.

Turning again to Bengal, we learn that artificial irrigation has hitherto been only very sparingly employed, and that in a most primitive way. 'No provision exists against damage to the crops caused by want of rain,' Mr Hunter affirmed, only a few years ago. Tanks are made to receive the periodical rains, some so large as even to cover twenty square acres, but they are for domestic, not agricultural, purposes. The rivers of Orissa carry away the waters unused to the sea. Every custom in Bengal agriculture is of the roughest and most primitive description. There you may see the bullocks 'treading out the corn,' the people grinding at the mill, as in the days of Bible history; and in rice-culture, 'there have been no improvements within the memory of man,' says the author before quoted. No new varieties have been introduced, either for drier lands or deeper marshes; whereas we know that the cultivation of opium is increasing annually, and now adds about £15,000,000 a year to our revenue. Local descriptions of the principal rice-growing districts let us into the secret of the oft-failing crops. Those in Orissa are close to tumultuous rivers, which overflow during the rainy season from torrents above, during the monsoon from the waters being driven inland, or in times of drought are dried up altogether. Scarcely a year passes without inundations. Out of thirty-two years ending in 1866 (the year of the famine), twenty-four were those of floods and devastation. Out of fifteen years of floods in Orissa, the only one of drought was followed by that of famine. To see many square miles of solid land turned into a sea, nine feet deep, for thirty days, is so much a matter of course, that most of the houses have boats tied to them in readiness to escape. In the lower parts of Bengal, many acres of land are annually devastated by floods. Yet, dire as are the floods, drought is a still greater enemy. After transplanting the roots, water alone will save them. If the rain be a little postponed, and do not come at the required

moment, the fine sandy loam is baked to a brick, and the young crops are burned past hope of recovery. If, on the contrary, rain fall a few inches too much, the whole country is swamped, and exposed, perhaps, to salt-water inundations equally fatal. In 1866, six thousand nine hundred acres were devastated by floods, and only one of the November crops was reaped. To engineering, then, is left the work of arresting famines. Miles and miles of acres in various provinces, now bringing only disappointment and suffering to the inhabitants, can be made productive at a cost small in comparison with the millions of gold and millions of souls now sacrificed to ignorance and prejudice. 'One finished canal is better than all the costly efforts afterwards.' Irrigation, embankments, drainage, and improved facilities for transport, are to be the saving of India. Each new canal that is opened is a fresh barrier to the inroads of famine; and among all the engineering triumphs of this nineteenth century, none shall be greater than those now set on foot in India, and which will enable England to say: 'There shall be no more Bengal rice-famines!'

The late census of Bengal has revealed to us more than we ever knew before of its teeming population, its infinity of castes, and traditional 'customs,' which render the people among the most difficult to deal with. It is only through such great national struggles for life as famines and wars that the intricacies of their faith can be assailed. A Hindn woman of high caste, be she ever so poor, will hide herself and perish rather than disgrace herself by labour. Life is of little value to them, but to labour is terrible. If, while the Hindu children are seated around their gigantic pile of rice, and cramming it into their mouths, the shadow of a white man passing fall upon the dish, the whole is 'defiled,' and thrown away. When, therefore, we read that so many thousands are applying to 'relief-works' here and there, we know what intercourse has already done to overcome traditional prejudices; and farther intercourse alone, together with agricultural improvements (though even these are 'sacrilegious' to many), can effect the desired revolution.

There are yet a few more facts which may be interesting at the present time. The wages of the labouring-classes in India vary from 1d. to 6d. a day. The *ryots* or peasantry are sometimes paid in rice—twelve or fourteen pounds of 'paddy' (unhusked rice) a day. The price varies according to the season. In good seasons, a 'maund' (about eighty pounds) can be bought for a rupee. In ordinary seasons, a rupee purchases from fifty to sixty pounds. Half a maund for 2s. is a sign of scarcity. 'If rice cost one rupee for thirty pounds in January, you may be sure there will be none left by July; we are told by those experienced in these things. Of the two, and in some places three, harvests in the year, the winter one is the principal, and that on which the year's supply mainly depends. New grain is very unwholesome; dysentery and other maladies follow from its use. Hunger is not the only evil to be dreaded; and cattle suffer as well as men. An artisan—a carpenter, for instance—who earns 3d. a day, must spend it all on rice in times of scarcity, and then not have enough.

Looking to these facts, and to the accounts lately given of the present famine in India, the

consideration is forced upon us, that the dependence of myriads of people on a single article of diet is an evil to be seriously deplored. The reliance of the Irish peasantry on potatoes offered an instance of this social error, now partially remedied, but only after much suffering and the self-expatriation of large numbers of inhabitants. As regards India, it is to be hoped that more will be done than merely supplying food, or extending means of irrigation. How the natives are to be induced to cultivate other edible products as well as rice, should be a matter of serious concern to statesmen connected with India. The absorption of arable land to rear opium, for the sake of revenue, is another matter which, we think, needs dispassionate consideration.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER XXX.—AN EAVES-DROPPER.

MAGGIE held in her hand, she had no doubt, the revelation of the mystery which had oppressed her for so many hours, and could have resolved it by the breaking of a seal. But the idea of doing so never entered her mind. Her husband's prohibition would have been all-sufficient for her, however expressed; but couched as it was in such touching terms, she would not have disobeyed it for an empire. She felt that she never could disobey it, whatever happened; that so long as she had reason to believe he was alive, that packet would be inviolable; for as to the alternative, 'Or when she shall have lost faith in me,' that was a supposition that her mind refused to entertain. There had been a time when she had not loved her husband as she did now, but there had been no time when she had not put faith in him. He was well aware of that himself, and hence this exceptional permission must needs have reference to some trial of her confidence in him yet to come. Whatever it might be, it would find her ready for it; deaf to every malicious tongue, blind to every act of his, which those who knew him less well might set down to an unworthy motive; or, still better, both hearing and seeing, she would have a justification for him, satisfactory to her own heart at least, let the world say what it would. What must he have suffered, what must he be suffering now, unconsoled, unsympathised with, alone! How out of all proportion was his punishment to his offence, since it could not be that she had imagined. What he had written in this paper could never be a confession that he was going forth to slay his enemy. No; a thousand times no! Whatever Dennis Blake might have done, or threatened to do, the idea that John should make up his mind beforehand to put him to death—'of malice aforethought,' as the law sternly designated it—was too terrible and monstrous; and, moreover, he had passed his word that he would take no such vengeance. The enigma of his disappearance, however, remained only the more inexplicable. What could have happened—short of the crime, which it was evident he had not committed—to change him in one short night from young to old, and to drive him from his wife and home for ever?

Sitting by the fire, plunged in gloomy but vague conjecture, and holding in her hand what would doubtless have resolved all her fears at a

single glance, but which not iron and steel could have made more inviolable to her, she suddenly became aware that the French-window opening on the lawn had become darkened behind her; that somebody was standing there, and in all probability watching her through its pane. Depressed and anxious as she was, she had not lost her presence of mind; on the contrary, the sense of the necessity of being mistress of herself had strung her nerves to meet almost any shock. If she was being watched, there must be a reason for it; something was sought to be learnt, perhaps, from her air and manner, when she was alone, and fancied herself unobserved. The inspector might not have been so satisfied with his interview as he had pretended to be, and might have taken this means—by no means unnatural to one of his calling—to judge for himself of the reality of the calmness and self-possession she had assumed before him. A shudder ran through her at the thought, that if he had taken such a step ten minutes before, immediately when, as she imagined, he had left the house, he would have seen her open the desk and take out the packet. Upon the packet, at this very moment, perhaps, his eyes were fixed. Its seal was turned towards him, and not its address. That was so far good, though, indeed, at the distance at which he stood, it was almost impossible he could have deciphered a word. She tapped it against her chin with an indifferent air; as one in thought might use a pencil or a paper-knife. Priceless and portentous as were its contents to her, sooner than let this man or any man possess himself of them, she would have cast it into the fire. Then, as if to shade her eyes from the firelight, she put up her hand before them, and glanced through her fingers up at the looking-glass, in which she knew the figure of the watcher would be reflected. It was well, indeed, that she took that precaution, for the sight that met her gaze was one to have overcome the most strenuous effort at self-possession. Close to the window, with his face pressed against the pane, and regarding her with a look of wolfish hate, stood Dennis Blake! A more frightful spectacle than his scowling countenance, made darker than even its ordinary hue, by reason of the falling snow, it would have been hard to imagine; but it wore besides an expression of triumphant malice, which she felt that she, and only she, could have evoked in it. That he had driven her husband from his roof, and was come to gloat over her in her despair and loneliness, she read plainly enough; but that wolfish face said more; he had only struck the first blow, and was meditating, in his cruel heart, a second and more fatal one. Unhappily, it would not be a direct blow. In that ease, she would not have flinched from it. She felt too much hate and scorn of him to harbour fear, if the conflict had been only between her and him. She would have defied him to his face, and dared his worst. But he was about to strike at her—it was as plain to her as though she saw his lifted knife and John between them—through her already stricken husband. And how should she ward the blow? These thoughts passed through her in a flash, more quickly than one snow-flake was succeeding another, and then she rose and confronted him. Perhaps he had expected her to start and shriek, for he held up his hand, as if for silence; but she was careful to exhibit mere pained surprise, indignant annoyance.

'Let me in,' said he, with his mouth against the pane. 'I wish to have a word with you alone. You had best do it,' added he menacingly.

She would have unlocked the glass door and let him in, but for the packet, which had doubtless already caught his eye, and which she felt he would have been quite capable of taking from her by force. 'If you have business with me, my servant will admit you,' answered she haughtily.

He hesitated, and cast a look at the frail barrier between them such as made her seize the bell-rope in alarm. Then muttering something between his teeth, he shrunk away, and the next moment she heard his ring at the front-door.

In an instant she had hidden the packet in her bosom, and felt, by comparison, sheathed in mail, and armed to meet him.

'There's Mr Dennis Blake, of all men, at the door, ma'am!' exclaimed the housekeeper, entering precipitately, and with undisguised alarm. 'I judged, of course, you would not see him—still, it is quite possible he might have some news of master.'

'That is to the last degree unlikely,' observed Maggie coldly. 'Still, if he has really business with me, shew him in.'

It seemed that Mr Dennis Blake had business with her, for immediately afterwards he was ushered in. At the sight of this man standing under her own roof-tree, whom she verily believed to have had some hand in Richard's death, her heart began to beat with passionate indignation; yet she dared not lay her hand upon it, lest she should betray the presence of that secret which very literally lay next her heart. The door had closed behind him, and they were alone; still, for some moments neither spoke, but stood regarding one another, like fencers about to engage, and who have taken the buttons off their foils. At last Blake spoke in that hoarse sullen voice that is so often the index of mental deformity, and which perhaps he could not have softened if he would: 'Is the man gone that was here a while ago?'

'What man?'

'The policeman. Don't suppose that I was asking upon my own account,' continued he, with a sneer, in reply to her gesture of assent. 'A policeman is nothing to me, one way or another.'

If she had never entertained a suspicion of this ruffian's having broken the law, she would have entertained it now; his insolent, braggart air was the very hall-mark of Felon. So furious did it make her against him, recalling as it did to her his imputed crime, that she felt a desire to take him by the throat and tax him with it.

'If you are come here, as you have said, upon business, Mr Blake,' said she, sternly, 'I must beg that you confine yourself to that topic.'

'I will,' said he, approaching her, with menacing eyes, and striking his clenched hand upon the table. 'Your husband is my topic, madam; where is he?'

'That is the question—supposing I wished to put any question to you, which I do not,' returned Maggie fiercely—'that I should rather ask of you. He has left me, without warning, just as his brother left this house two years ago.'

'Ah!'—he stepped back a pace, but keeping his eyes fixed upon her with great intentness—'you associate those two circumstances together, do you?'

'I do; and I associate them both with you.'

'There you are right,' said he, with a crooked smile, that seemed to her to speak of audacious guilt—the triumphant hardihood of impunity. 'My business, then, will need the less introduction. If it should try your nerves a little, that is not my fault, but his who has made this visit necessary. I ask you once more, madam, where is your husband? He has left you, you say, without warning, as his brother did, yet not, I will venture to assert, without letting his dear wife—that should have been his brother's—know whither he is gone. And I must know that too. I should have kept to my bargain, and left you alone, unmolested, if he had kept to his. But if he has run away, that is equivalent to breaking it.'

'Run away? What cause should my husband have to run away?' answered Maggie boldly. 'What thing has John Milbank ever done of which he need be ashamed? What man exists whom he can have cause to fear?'

'With the thing, madam, I hope it will not be necessary to trouble you just at present, nor perhaps even at all; but as to the man, that individual now stands before you.'

'What! would you have me believe that my husband fears Dennis Blake—the ruined cheat, the blackleg, the slanderer of a girl's fair fame, and whom he cudgelled in the public street for soiling it. You lie, you coward!'

Blake's dusky face grew livid with rage, and in his eyes there came a sudden fire, that seemed to dry their unwholesome moisture up. 'I do not lie, madam,' said he, in a grating voice; 'yet I am not so rude as to contradict a lady. You believe all you say, no doubt. John Milbank is incapable of an evil action, far less of a criminal one: so wise, so good, so temperate, that he may be called a model man, and especially the Best of Husbands; and, on the other hand, this Dennis Blake may have been all you say—cheat, slanderer, coward; still the fact remains that it is from this very Dennis Blake, and for abject fear of him, that your husband has left his home. And if you ask me Why, it is for this simple reason, that Dennis Blake can bring him to the gallows.'

Maggie forced an incredulous laugh; but her heart seemed suddenly to wither within her, and the light of life itself to flicker in its socket, as though in act to leave her; for she believed him. Her faith in John was as firm as ever; he could never have been guilty of any crime, save that of which this wretch's presence proved him innocent. But though John might be infallible, the law was not; and somehow—she had not the faintest notion how—he might have innocently forfeited his life to it, become the victim of some conspiracy, which had pointed him out to purblind Justice. That he stood in dread of some great danger or catastrophe, she already knew, and doubtless this was it. What should she do? To defy him, to rid herself, at all hazards, of this man's polluting presence, was her first impulse; but the very ease of such a course made her mistrustful of it. If Blake had really any grave accusation to make against her husband, the absence of the accused could not fail to give it weight. The next day, or hour, might bring him home, or, at all events, bring tidings of his whereabouts, which might enable her to communicate with him and put him on his guard. Moved by these reflections, Maggie swallowed her

pride and anger, though they went nigh to choke her, and resolved to temporise.

'You smile, madam,' continued Blake, 'at the notion of this model husband of yours having put his neck in danger, yet I possess the proof of it in his own handwriting; so much I will tell you: more, I have no wish to tell, unless I am compelled to do so. I would not have intruded upon you to-day, if he himself had not driven me to it. It was only by a happy accident that I chanced to be still at Hilton, and thereby came to know that he had cut and run. But I must be certified that he has not done so for good and all. The case stands thus, madam: I hear, on all sides, that John Milbank has taken himself off, not even his wife knows whither. The papers are full of it; the police are busy with it; I cannot be blind and deaf to what is passing under my own eyes and ears. Thus, notwithstanding that I promised your husband to keep quiet, for the present, yet I am obliged to bestir myself. If he really is not here, I must put the screw on you!'

Maggie heard but little of these excuses: she had only a general impression of menace—of ruin held in suspense over her for some motive which, whatever it might be, had nothing to do with mercy; the words that kept ringing in her ears were these: 'I possess the proof of it in his own handwriting;' the proof, that was, of her husband's culpability in the eye of the law. That Blake did possess it, she had no doubt. His presence there was too audacious to be explained by anything short of the fact. If the life and honour of her husband were not in this man's hand, he at least imagined that they were so. An idea flashed upon her, which for the moment lit up her soul with hope. If this compromising document had been written within the last forty hours, all might yet be well, if only time were given. Doubtless it was when about to write it, driven by some inexorable power, the nature of which she could not guess, that her husband had come up to her room that night to ask for the terminable ink. In this case, whatever he had written would be null and void in a few days.

'You do not appear to be favouring me with your attention, madam,' continued Blake sternly. 'Yet, with a word—a single word—I could rivet it, if I chose. What I was about to remark was, that there was no time to lose in obtaining security for what is due to me; since at present I have received nothing—nothing, that is, beyond a few pounds to pay a tailor's bill—except very handsome promises.'

'If what you say is true, or any of it,' observed Maggie calmly, 'how comes it you have not received your dues? How does it happen that you have gone so long without them, and that only when my husband leaves his home, you come hither to put the screw on, as you call it, upon an unprotected woman? You would never have dared to come, if he had been here!'

'I should not have come, madam—not because I was afraid of him; the fear is quite on the other side, I do assure you—but simply because, in that case, there would have been no occasion for my coming. The little arrangement between him and me dates only from the other night, nor had I the slightest reason to doubt Mr Milbank's intention of fulfilling it, until I heard that he had fled from his home. The creditor is naturally suspicious when he hears that his debtor has levanted; and I have

come here to know for certain from your lips how matters stand. If your husband has really taken himself off, there is no need for concealment between you and me as to the why and wherefore; you must then indeed know all, or you might fail to perceive the necessity of being my banker; but if, on the other hand, he is coming back again, I warn you that I had better not let the cat out of the bag, for it is a cat he would be very unwilling for you to see.'

'I have no wish to pry into my husband's secrets,' observed Maggie steadily, 'and least of all to hear them from the lips of such a man as you.'

'That is very dutiful, madam, and very wise—wiser, perhaps, than you have any idea of. (The compliment to myself, I pass over, as being beside the question.) Yes—to be convinced, against one's will, of the infamy of the best of husbands—nay, if you flare up at that, you are certainly right to shun the truth—of course it is better to keep your eyes shut, and hope the best. But still I have my own interest to look to, and that may compel me to open them.'

'To keep her eyes shut, and hope the best!' That taunt of this heartless wretch exactly described the condition of mind at which Maggie had arrived. Her only safety from despair seemed to lie in ignorance. She might indeed, perhaps, have dared to learn the worst, but for the remembrance of the packet that lay in her bosom. 'When I am dead, or when you have lost your faith in me, seek to know all, but not till then,' it said. And she would wait till then.

'I do not understand what it is you want of me,' said she, after a long pause.

'I want nothing—for the present—except a little information. You told me a while ago that you did not know whither your husband had gone. Now, with the new lights that may have broken upon you in the meantime, just reconsider that answer. I have no doubt you gave it to the inspector, to your father, to Mr. Lynch, and the rest of them; but still, it may not have been quite correct, for all that. The rumour—propagated by yourself, as it, in all probability, has been—that John Milbank has gone mad is, I know, untrue: on Tuesday night last, I can answer for it, he was quite well in health, and in full possession of his faculties. It would be very well for him if he did go mad, perhaps, but that would not suit my book. Now, since you have stooped to one little deception, you may possibly have ventured upon another. He may have told you everything, for all I know, and the whole affair may be a plant to escape his liabilities. You must, therefore, excuse my once more repeating a question you have already answered in the negative.'

'I do not know where my husband is, Mr. Blake,' said Maggie firmly, 'nor why he has left me. On the other hand, you are right in supposing that I have practised some deception. My husband is not mad; it was to save my own wifely pride from humiliation, that, having no reason to give for his desertion of me, I feigned he was so. Mr. Milbank is as sane as I am.'

'And he has written to you since his absence?' broke in the other cunningly. 'You were reading a letter from him just before I entered; I should like to see that letter.' And he cast a greedy eye towards the desk.

'My husband's letters are sacred from all eyes

but mine,' replied Maggie coldly. 'I will, however, tell you this much of its contents: though he gives neither address, nor explanation of his absence, he promises to return home within the week.'

'The week!' echoed Blake, glancing at her with quick suspicion. 'Why the week?'

'I know nothing of that, for he gives his reasons for nothing. "I shall return on the 14th," he says; that is all he writes about his movements.'

'I don't understand it,' mused Blake thoughtfully. 'But then, unless he was really mad—which we both know he is not—I don't understand his going away at all. He knows he cannot escape me; that death itself would only transfer my hold on him from him to you. Yes, you would have to pay, madam, handsomely, liberally, if you have the regard for him with which he credits you, and which I do not doubt. Still, you may have some plan between you, by which you imagine that Dennis Blake may be checkmated. You would be building on the sand, it is true, nay, on the ice itself; and your punishment would be swift and dire. That would not be to my advantage, I confess it,' added he sharply; 'but revenge is sweet, and I would have it; such revenge as you cannot dream of, and which would make up for all. One does not fear to fall, you understand, just so far'—and he held his hand a few feet from the floor—'when one drags down one's enemy from his pride of place in the very skies.'

'I do not doubt your malice, sir.'

'You are right there, madam,' cried he, with sudden ferocity. 'Nor need you doubt my power to indulge it. However, a few days more or less will not alter matters: you may be lying to me—I daresay you are—but I will wait the week.'

'And then?'

'Then I shall come again with the confessions—I mean with the proofs I spoke of, in your husband's handwriting, and in his absence make my terms with you. They will be such as, if I were to state them now, might well astound you; and yet, you will then acknowledge that they might be harder. Do not trouble yourself, however, with thinking what that secret is, the hush-money for which is so secure; for when you learn it, take my word for it, that the dearest wish of your heart will be, that it could be unlearned. And above all things'—here he stretched out a menacing finger—'do not hope that by any plot or plan you can escape me; my eye will be on you from this hour, vigilant as that of the miser upon his store; and if you did escape, it would only be as the flight of the tethered bird, who, with the first beat of his wing, perceives the string that binds him. You will see me this day week, madam, and at the same time.'

'Not the same time,' exclaimed Maggie firmly. 'If your business is such as you describe it to be, the morning is surely no time for its discussion. We must be alone, and not liable to interruption. Let it be evening.'

He looked at her with searching eyes, as he replied: 'Is this to gain time, mistress? or is it that you do not wish your neighbours to suppose that Dennis Blake is on your list of morning callers? Well, perhaps you are right. If we come to terms—and there is no help for that, I promise you—it will be better that no connection between me and Rosebank shall have been suspected; and a few hours more or less cannot affect my position.'

This day week, then, in the evening.' With a surly sideways nod, pregnant with menace, by way of parting salutation, Maggie's visitor withdrew, gazing sternly at her to the last, and she at him.

CHAPTER XXXI.—AN EVENING INTERVIEW.

'This day week, then,' reflected Maggie, as she stood where Blake had left her, staring thoughtfully into the fire, 'this man will be here again, with John's confession!' That was the word he used, or had been about to use, and she did not blink it. It was necessary to look all things in the face that it was lawful for her to look at. It was not lawful for her to open the packet she carried in her bosom, and learn the worst—that worst, which Blake had told her she would so bitterly wish unlearned; for John was not dead, nor had she even yet lost faith in him. That he had got into trouble, nay, that there was danger to his life, she did not doubt, and somehow or other this villain had the power to bring destruction and shame upon him. But she did not believe him guilty, in a moral sense. If she had done so, nay, if she had had any doubt of him, it would have been clearly her duty to put herself upon equal terms with her enemy, by gaining possession of all the facts, and then to fight him as best she could. As it was, she had small choice of weapons, but of such as they were, she had already made her choice. While she had been listening, or seeming to listen, to her visitor, nay, even while she had been talking to him, she had been all the while selecting it, sharpening it, balancing it in her hand. As to the temper of the blade, she could tell nothing for certain, till the moment had come to strike; but she believed in it, and was resolved to use it. That was something! Instead of brooding over her present calamities, or upon the coming peril, she had that blow to think of—the one desperate blow she was about to give, not in self-defence, but in defence of one dearer than herself—and its effect. If the steel were true, and did its duty, it might so cripple her foe that he need be no longer feared; but if it broke in her grasp, and failed her, matters would even be worse than they were. The blow would recoil upon herself—nay, more, upon her husband—and bring upon them both immediate and utter ruin. It was a terrible risk, but she must take the risk, having no option. What a little weapon it was, and, up to this hour, how she had despised it! If it should do her this good service, how she would prize it, and bless and cherish the dear hand that had placed it within her reach!

The idea of John's returning home, and thereby releasing her from personal responsibility in the affair, did not enter into her mind. She felt that he would never return; that he dared not do so, because of this vile wretch and what he knew; that there could be none to help her; and her instinct told her truth.

Hour after hour, day after day, passed by, and yet there came no tidings of John Milbank. Just as in the case of his brother Richard, he had disappeared, leaving no trace behind him. No one had seen him in the street, in the highway, nor at the railway station. (They might well have done so, however, thought Maggie, bitterly, and yet not recognised him.) The newspapers indulged themselves in the wildest conjectures; the police were utterly at fault. Mr Inspector Brain (for that was

the name of the officer who had 'charge' of the now famous 'Rosebank case') was often at the house, closeted with Maggie alone, or in consultation there with her father and Mr Linch. But nothing came of all this stir. The traces of John's departure seemed to have melted away as utterly as the snow on which his last footsteps had been imprinted.

And so the day came round at last which was to bring Dennis Blake and his dread news. Maggie had no hope that he might fail to keep tryst from any cause: that he might have gone away, or that he might be ill, or that he might have repented through any sense of insecurity or loss of power over her. She painted to herself none of these chances in her favour, which we are all so apt to paint, when a great misfortune threatens us; she clung to no straws, but looked at her peril, not in the face, indeed, for it had no face—it was only a terrible something over which a cloth hung loosely, suggesting the sharp stiff outlines of Death; but she looked at that with steady eyes, hoping and praying, that when Blake's cruel hand should twitch it away, and shew the features, she should be calm and steady still. Maggie knew that it would have been idle to attempt to conceal that this man had already called at Rosebank, and she had made up some story of an old debt of Richard's to him, which he wished his brother to settle, to account for the fact. It had, fortunately, seemed to those who knew him, not inconsistent with Blake's character, that he should have taken this audacious step on hearing that John had left his home; the extortion of money under false pretences being a line of business very likely for him to take up, should any opening in that way seem to offer itself. But both Mr Linch and her father had expressed such indignation at the occurrence, that it had actually added a weight to the burden of her cares. What if they should meet, and tax him with his villainy, and put him so beside himself with their reproaches, that he should tell *them* the secret of his power over her husband! On this very day, her father had remained with her later than usual, and she was on thorns, lest, while he was still in the house, Blake should present himself at the door, and there should be a scene, such as she dared not picture to herself, since one of its effects might be to blunt that weapon which was the only hope she had, or even make it useless. In the conflict that was about to ensue between her and Blake, it was above all things essential to her plan that they should be alone. At half-past eight, however, on that long-looked-for evening, the engraver left her, and at nine came Dennis Blake, and was at once, by her directions, admitted into the parlour. The fire was burning brightly, there were candles as well as a lamp upon the table, and the room, with its close-drawn curtains, looked very snug and home-like. Such was the impression, at all events, that it seemed to have upon the new-comer, for he looked around him with great complacency, so much so, indeed, that a casual observer would have concluded that all these evidences of comfort were signs of his own prosperity, and that the place belonged to himself.

'Well, madam, so there is no news of this husband of yours?' said Blake, declining the seat to which Maggie motioned him, and taking his standpoint upon the rug, with his back to the fire, as

though he were the proprietor of the house. 'No news at all, I suppose?'

'None at all.'

'Ah, I thought as much,' continued the other bluntly. 'He has bolted for good and all, to save his neck.'

'I have heard you say that before,' observed Maggie, looking quietly up at him, from some work in which she was making-pretence to be engaged; 'and I tell you now, as I told you then, you lie!'

'Indeed!' cried he, with a harsh discordant laugh. 'I don't remember that you were quite so sure, or so plump as that. However, it is very excusable. That this model of morality should have done anything wrong, is, of course, astonishing to you; and that, having done it, this Best of Husbands should have run away, and left his wife to bear the brunt of it, and pay the piper for it, that seems still stranger, don't it?'

'It seems, and is, incredible,' observed Maggie coldly.

'Incredible, is it? Well, it may even seem that; however, seeing is believing, they say, and before we have had this talk out, I shall be compelled to open your eyes. The story I have to tell you begins from a long time back; but not to be wearisome, let us strike down into it about two years ago, when the incident took place to which I mainly owe the honour of this interview. I allude to Richard Milbank's disappearance. Do you remember, on the morning afterwards, your present husband's overtaking me in the street, when you and your father were with him, and putting certain questions to me?'

'I do remember it,' Maggie's tones were quiet at all times, but she spoke now with unusual gravity and distinctness, as though she weighed every word.

'Well, what he inquired of me was, whether I had seen Richard on the previous night—or, rather, far into the morning. And I answered "No." It was not the truth, yet it was not telling him a lie, inasmuch as he knew that it was not the truth. He knew that Richard had gone from me to him between three and four, and yet that I was not the last person who beheld him ere he left the town.'

'Indeed!' observed Maggie, with the air of one who is interested in spite of herself. 'How could that be?'

'You should rather ask me, how could I know that it was so,' continued the other, 'especially since it was your own handiwork that lay at the bottom of it all. Do you remember imitating in jest, and to please the man for whom you would have done it in earnest, John Milbank's signature?'

'No,' answered Maggie, keeping her eyes firmly fixed on that of her interlocutor; 'I do not.'

'You did it, madam, however, nevertheless: I do not say, with any bad intentions, but you did it. The piece of paper on which you wrote that name was an order for a thousand pounds; and not long afterwards—in the course of business—it happened to fall into my hands. A forged bill, in some cases, is worth quite as much as a good bill, and so it happened with this one. Having my doubts about its genuineness, I went to the drawer myself—your present husband, and, greatly to my surprise, he cashed it. And again—so curious are some mercantile transactions—the money John Milbank paid for that forged bill was not lost to him. He got his money's worth out of it—and

you, madam, were mixed up in this part of the business every whit as much as at the beginning—by holding it in *terrorem* over Richard's head. "If you don't leave the country," he said, "and the business, and the young woman, for whom I have quite as great a fancy as you have, I'll put you in the dock for forgery." He'd got Master Richard in a cleft stick, you see, and there was nothing for him but to cave in; and he did cave in. He wrote a letter, at his brother's dictation, to say that he was about to leave Hilton for good and all; and John gave him a hundred pounds to go with; and he went.' Here Blake's thin lips broke into a derisive smile, and he repeated the words, 'He went,' like one who rolls some choice morsel under his tongue.

'Is this all you have to tell me?' inquired Maggie quietly.

'No; it is not,' answered the other, with a sneer; 'nor nearly all. Richard went, but he didn't go very far. Upon his way out of the country, not half a mile from Rosebank, he stopped at my lodgings, to settle accounts with me. I had promised, you see, not to present the bill for a few months—at which time he hoped to have been safe over the seas, and to snap his fingers at me; and he was naturally irritated that I should have doubted his stainless honour in the matter, and made personal inquiries. He called, in fact, in a bad humour; but I very soon put him into a good one with the news, that his brother had admitted the signature of the bill to be his own, and had cashed it. He had no more power to prosecute him then, you see, than if the offence had never been committed. Your husband must have got the character of being a good man of business on very cheap terms, not to have forseen this, and to have let me keep the bill; but he was soft-hearted, it seems, about the possible consequences, especially as regarded you. You would not have relished giving evidence in open court against your lover, and describing how he had made a cat's-paw of you to rob his brother. Don't you see?'

'I see what you mean,' answered Maggie, scarcely able to repress a shudder.

'Well, finding the law could not touch him, Richard cared little for the promise he had given, or the letter he had left behind him, and from that moment thought no more of leaving Hilton than I did; so we sat down together to a friendly game at piquet, in the course of which I won that hundred pound cheque of him, about which there was afterwards such a fuss; and that put his back up, and he said he would play no more, but would go home. Do you understand me? He said he would go home—that is, to this very house.'

She understood him well enough, and would have told him so, but that her tongue refused its office.

'It is surely quite intelligible,' continued he, misconstruing her silence, 'why Richard should have come home.' He had no longer cause to fear his brother, and was greatly irritated with him for having frightened him unnecessarily. He had been also drinking pretty freely, and was in the humour for a quarrel. He left my lodgings between four and five in the morning—I let him out with my own hands, and saw him go—and he took the road to Rosebank.'

'I have your word for that,' said Maggie, in bold contemptuous tones.

'Yes, you have but that at present, and I don't blame you for not being in a hurry to believe it,' continued Blake coldly. 'Nor was I in a hurry to believe your excellent husband when he came to me with that cock-and-bull story of his brother having gone away from Hilton to try his fortune in America or the antipodes. In the first place, he could have had no money to go with unless John had replenished his purse for him; in the next place, he would not have gone, if it had been replenished. Master Dick had his own attractions at Hilton besides yourself, as you have since discovered, and was generally disinclined to make his fortune anywhere, preferring to have it ready made at home by John. However, it was not for me to say so; that one hundred pound bill might still have taken an ugly turn (though I had won it fairly enough), and it was high time to be washing my hands of Dick, for other reasons. I did not wish, either, to have it said of me that I had got that cheque out of him—precious glad I remember I was to get it changed—between three and four in the morning at my own lodgings; so, when John asked, had I seen his brother that night, I answered "No." It was an answer that he was very glad to get, though I saw he didn't believe it; and if I had known what a weight it took from his mind, I would never have uttered it. I might have had him under my heel at that moment—if I had only known all—almost as safe as I have him now.' Here he raised his foot, and beat it upon the rug, as though his enemy were actually and indeed beneath it. 'Can you guess at all, my pretty madam, what I am coming to presently?' inquired he hoarsely.

'I cannot,' answered she firmly.

'I daresay not; I did not even guess it myself at that time; I knew John Milbank to be a stuck-up sneak and hypocrite; I hated him almost as I hate him now, even then, but I did not credit him with—MURDER.'

Maggie knew what was coming—had been prepared for it from almost the very first—and had never for an instant lost the consciousness of a certain dire necessity for preserving her self-command, yet she shuddered from head to foot as she echoed that dreadful word with her parched tongue: 'Murder?'

MERAN AND THE GRAPE-CURE.

MERAN, the ancient capital of the Tyrol, though it has long ceded its metropolitan honours to Innsbruck, remains the headquarters of the grape-cure, and is unrivalled for beauty of situation and charm of climate. The route for ordinary travellers to reach this delightful little town, is by the Rhine and Munich, over the Brenner Pass to Botzen, whence it is about a couple of hours' drive. But those more adventurous spirits who prefer to rough it a little, and to study the manners and customs of the country, amidst fine scenery and fresh mountain-air, had better go by the Lake of Constance to Bregenz, crossing the Arlberg and Finstermünz, and they will be rewarded by a journey which will live long in their memories, and which is suitably terminated among the beauties of this Southern Paradise.

Following this plan, we crossed the mountains towards the end of last September. Nothing could exceed the beauty of the route. The Arlberg was in all the glory of early autumn, or

rather summer had scarcely departed from its lovely slopes, though snow lay lightly on its highest peaks. The pines were heavy with their cones, fragrant in the sunshine; rose-trees covered with haws, hanging branches of barberries and other wild-fruits, flashed scarlet through the woods; and ferns and mosses, sprinkled with blue gentian, made beautiful the glades between the trees. The little river Inn, our constant companion, rushed, slid, and gurgled along or below our path, throughout our journey, and at night afforded an excellent supper of trout, at the clean comfortable little inns where we rested on our way. We generally found ourselves *en route* at sunrise, when the exquisite brightness, freshness, and purity of morning on the mountains, made it the pleasantest hour of the day.

After three days of this agreeable travelling, we reached the valley in which Meran lies. The approach is very striking. Rounding the shoulder of a mountain, you come suddenly on a scene of peace and of luxuriant beauty which might boast a vale of Arcadia. Mountains of six or seven thousand feet high inclose a wide valley, dotted with farmsteads and white cottages, all surrounded by a southern vegetation. Here grow magnificent Spanish chestnut and fig trees, while a perfect network of vines trained over trellises covers the hills. Along the edge of the road grow immense pumpkins, with their robust picturesque leaves, and yellow flowers gazing right in the sun's eye; while beyond, lie fields of Indian corn—making up altogether a rich and luxuriant picture. After a couple of miles of this scenery, we entered Meran, a sunny cheerful town, lying on the right bank of the bright and brawling little river Passer.

From one end to the other of the principal street of Meran, run, on each side, dark and heavy arcades, gloomy, indeed, but not unpleasant in a climate where the sun, for many months of the year, holds such undisputed sway. Under these, all mercantile transactions, including a brisk traffic in grapes and figs, take place. Beyond, are the pretty *Anlogen* of the town, owing much to nature, and a very little to art, and there stand the best hotels and *pensions*. Here the Passer is crossed by several bridges, the gardens lying on each side; and along the bank is the broad Gisela Promenade, sheltered from the sun by a fine avenue of trees, and affording a charming walk in winter.

The population of Meran numbers four thousand five hundred; this is greatly increased during the months of August, September, and October, by strangers, who come for the grape-cure, and to rest a while in a climate so dry and warm, and yet so much cooler than Italy during this season. The visitors are German, Russian, and Italian, with a few English and Americans; and invalids, especially those suffering from chest-complaints, find it an excellent winter residence. Nothing can exceed the cheerfulness of the sunny apartments looking on the Gisela Promenade, or the pretty *pensions* of Obermais, a village to the south of Meran, and connected with it by the *Anlogen*; but standing, as it does, above the town, it is rather more exposed, and the temperature somewhat lower and more bracing. Apartments and single rooms are hired by the month during the spring and autumn, and the prices vary, according to size and situation, from twelve to

forty-five gulden. Living at Meran is decidedly cheaper than in most of the Italian and French places of resort; the pensions charge from three to five gulden a day, though it is possible for those whose circumstances will not permit of this, to live for less. Good furnished houses and villas can be found for families who prefer their own housekeeping; but in these cases, it is well to bring one's own cook, as good ones are seldom to be found here.

An English service is held twice every Sunday in the Lutheran Chapel; there is a fluctuating congregation of thirty or forty English and Americans during the season, and the little chapel is well and nicely kept. On one Sunday during our stay, the harvest festival took place; and Indian corn, pomegranates, bunches of grapes, boughs of red apples, magnolia blossoms, and brilliant autumn flowers, hung in a splendid garland over the communion-table.

The amusements of Meran are of a very unexciting description; and beyond walks in the beautiful environs, and excursions to some places of interest, of which there are several in the vicinity, there is little else in the way of entertainment. The Meranese are not an enterprising people, and trust confidently to the beauty of their town and climate, and most implicitly to their grapes, to allure the stranger. And there is a charm in this simplicity far more delightful to many than the usual stereotyped amusements of a watering-place. The band plays every morning in the gardens; and here the visitors walk eating grapes, or sit under trees eating grapes, or read or sketch with a basket of grapes beside them, or ramble about in family groups—all, and always, eating grapes. In the afternoon, the greater part of the community disperse in carriages, on horse or donkey back, or in *chaises à porteur*, to see some famous view or old *Schloss* (always finishing by a *régalé* of coffee), on some fair hillside or ruin-crowned mountain. Now and then, a concert will be given, or a lecture on a popular subject, at one of the principal hotels; but out-of-door pleasures are decidedly in the ascendant at Meran, and with good reason. There are two lending libraries, said to be well furnished with books in different languages; but having brought our own supply, we cannot speak of these from experience.

But the great object of interest here, the absorbing occupation of life is—eating grapes. The first thing one does on arriving at Meran is to buy a basket; and the visitor is to be seen at seven next morning, gay and exultant, buying grapes, to fill his purchase of the evening before, wondering much at their cheapness; yet discovering after a very few days' experience, that he paid rather highly in giving at once the price demanded. For grapes of the richest bloom and most delicious flavour are to be seen all around: they hang in purple bunches over all the hills, in every garden, round every cottage porch; carts and baskets, full of them, are brought into the town every morning, and they lie heaped on stalls in glorious profusion at the corners of the streets. Everybody who comes 'takes the grape-cure,' to the extent of eating more grapes than he ever did before in his life, unless he prefers figs, which are almost as plentiful and excellent. But I propose now to speak of those invalids suffering from bronchial affections, or incipient consumption, or other

complaints for whom this most agreeable of all medicines has been prescribed.

No quantity of grapes under three pounds a day can be considered as a true and energetic grape-cure—less than this is mere pleasant dallying. The patient begins with one or two pounds a day, dividing the quantity into three portions—one taken an hour before breakfast, the next between that and dinner (which takes place at 12.30 or 1 at latest, at Meran), and the last portion in the afternoon or evening, an hour before the last meal of the day. The grapes must be eaten in the open air, an injunction obeyed to the letter at Meran, as everybody walks about eating grapes all day long, unless you prefer taking one of your three portions sitting in your verandah, gazing lazily out over the lovely country. After a couple of days, the quantity is to be increased by half a pound, until it reaches three or four pounds. This is often sufficient—dependent, of course, upon the nature of the disease, the progress it has made, &c. Many people eat six pounds daily, although as many as eight is said to be unusual. Patients are not to be discouraged if they feel less well after three or four days of grape-eating; this is not seldom the case; but this crisis being past, they speedily feel the benefit of the treatment. One great advantage of the grape-cure is, that no special diet is enforced. Food in any way trying to the digestion is, of course, forbidden; and other fruit is in general not recommended; but after eating from four to six pounds of grapes daily, one does not feel any particular inclination for further indulgence in Pomona's bounties. Grapes, containing a large quantity of nourishment, have a very satisfying effect on the appetite generally, and less of other food is required; and in cases where the cure is taking good effect, the patient gains in weight, and, after a while, in strength also. As there are some diseases of the respiratory organs for which the grape-cure is rather injurious than otherwise, it is necessary to consult a physician before undertaking it. The cure occupies from four to six weeks, and during September and October, the grapes are at their best. Early ones are to be obtained in August, and late ones in November, but they are neither so good nor so efficacious: the country, too, is in its greatest beauty during the height of the grape-season. Not but what April is a charming month at Meran, when the abundant almond and apricot trees are a mass of blossom; and when the traveller returning home after a winter passed in Italy, is tempted to linger awhile in the pretty little town, before proceeding northward.

The people of Meran are a simple folk, prosperous and contented, and, as a general rule, exceedingly honest. They have little idea of anything beyond their valleys, but are nevertheless curious enough about strangers and their ways. On one of our excursions into the country, we sat down on the roadside to rest and watch the sunset; the people were returning from the fields, and smiled and stared undisguisedly at us as they passed; one woman let her companions go on, and came and sat down beside us. Then began a string of quiet, civilly worded, but most pertinacious questions, about our home, the distance we had come, why we had come, of the different members of our family, but especially about our dress. She gave her opinion freely as to the beauty and expediency of trimmings, sleeve-links, &c. and

examined and asked the price of every article we wore. This catechism began to last a little too long, and, rather to her disappointment, we got up at length, wished her good-evening, and walked away before she had nearly finished all she had got to say. Their honesty, as beforesaid, is certainly indisputable; but there are spots upon the sun; and on one occasion, on returning from a drive, we missed an umbrella, but not till the following day, when the servants of the hotel said it had been put into the carriage, but had not been seen since. We sent to the coachman who drove us, and he returned answer that no umbrella had been left in his carriage. As it could not be found, we thought that, to avoid any mistake, it would be well to send for the man and question him ourselves. He came, protesting that it was neither left in his carriage, nor was it anywhere in his possession. Upon this, we merely remarked, in mournful accents, that it was a pity it could not be found, as we had intended giving a good *Trinkgeld* to whoever restored it. A look of light passed over his stolid face; he briskly left the room, and in five minutes more a knock came to our door. 'Come in,' and the door opening, the point of the umbrella was protruded inside, the man following, not shamefaced, but rather elate. No one could help laughing; and the Trinkgeld was gladly paid for the ransom of our useful travelling companion, given up for lost. The maid of the hotel said the man's behaviour was 'ein ächter Skandal,' and that he ought, in decency, to have deferred bringing it for an hour or so after finding it!

We spent a month at Meran, during which time we had, I believe, one day of rain, and two or three cloudy ones; but all my recollections of it are associated with light and warmth, autumn colours of extraordinary brilliancy, and the sound of waters racing over the stones in the sunshine.

DENNY'S INTENTIONS.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER IV.

THE exuberant spirits in which Mr Blake had retired to rest didn't accompany him through the watches of the night. He rose with a great load of care upon his mind, for the future looked amazingly blank and dreary. He had lost his place at Hutton's, and he didn't know what to turn to. It was all very well to have some fun out of Denny. But he couldn't keep it up. He would see him to-day, and tell him that he had found out his fine intentions were all nonsense, and that for the future he should shape his course without any reference to Denny's paramount interest in his well-being.

When he talked the matter over with his sister at breakfast, she advised him to try and make it up with Hutton, and go on for a while on the old terms. But this Charlie wouldn't hear of. 'It would be the same thing in the end,' he said, 'and, as I shall have to make a fresh start, I'd better make it at once.' He went off, therefore, to Silverbridge, with the intention of going to Hutton's office, drawing his pay, and taking away his old office-coat.

As he reached the corner of the High Street where the office stood, he saw Denny's pony-chair standing by the kerb, a small boy holding the pony's head. It was the same pony that he had

seen fifteen years ago and more, just at the same place; very gray now about the muzzle, and more obstinate and cantankerous than ever. Carlo the spaniel had been dead some years, and Denny had never replaced him.

The sight of the pony and chair standing there at the corner brought vividly to his mind the incident in his school-boy life that had first put into his head this stupid delusion about Denny's intentions. He couldn't help feeling that unwittingly he had permitted it to exert a baneful influence on his life. Well, he had got rid of it at last, and must make a fresh start.

The chimes struck up their preludes to the hour, telling out their little parable with sweet reiteration. Was it something in the air that was soft and drowsy, and infected everything with a kind of indistinctness, that the chimes of Silverbridge should tinkle so slowly and lazily? They hung fire sometimes in the middle of the strain, as if the bells had dozed off, and the hammer were too sleepy to strike. Charlie yawned, and rubbed his eyes involuntarily. Had he been asleep for fifteen years; and his life, was it all a dream? There stood the pony-chair, and there was the familiar door, and, as he pulled the bell, it sprang open in the same soft mysterious way that had awed him as a boy. Perhaps he would find Denny inside; that would save him a little trouble.

'The governor wishes to speak to you at once,' said Marrables, with a kind of fey joy, pointing with the butt of his pen to the inner office.

'How are you, Charlie?' said Hutton warmly, rising and shaking him by the hand. 'None the worse for your shaking, eh? You mustn't think anything of what I said last night. I was put out at something, and let off steam on you. Let things go on as before.'

'No, Mr Hutton,' said Charlie, shaking his head; 'you only told me the truth last night, and opened my eyes. I'm not going to be a pensioner on you any longer; and as for Denny'—

'Why, Denny's been here this morning, and made a will in your favour, spoke of you in the highest terms, and desired me to inform you of it at once, and let you have a copy of the will, if you wished it. I told him I thought he'd made a very wise choice, for he's no relations of his own, and he hated his wife, who's been dead twenty years, like poison, and all her relations.'

'Ah, I know all about that, Mr Hutton, and I'll tell you how it happened.'

But at that moment Mr Marrables put his head into the office, and cried out: 'O sir, have you heard about Mr Denny?'

When Denny left Mr Hutton's office, he walked up the High Street with his hands behind his back, musing and muttering to himself. 'Make the boy my heir, eh! a pretty thing indeed; leave my money, that it's taken me all my life to get together, to a gay young spark like that! Ah! he'd just go on the same as any other of your country gents, dining late, and giving parties, and drinking wine. No thought then of old Denny, and how he got his money. Now, I want the place to be kept so as everybody will say: Ah! this is just how Denny would have gone on. I'd like the chap to be a bit harder than me, too, so as people might say: Ah, we'd as live have old Denny back again, than go on with this here chap. Now, Joe Swickstock, my poor wife's brother, never gave away a

penny in his life, nor spent one unless he could see his way to get tuppence back; he's the chap to keep the property together. Yes, Joe shall have it; but I must keep Charlie and Hutton in the dark. It will be a good thing too for Blake. He'll marry Fanny Hutton on the strength of his expectations, and then Hutton will have to keep 'em, and Charlie will be no expense to me to keep out of mischief. Oh, Denny's the chap to dodge 'em,' he finished with a chuckle. 'Now I'll go to Button and Sprid to see about the codicil.'

The office of Button and Sprid was a good way up the High Street, and the entrance was reached by a short flight of wooden steps, leading to what had been originally the first-floor window of the house, which had been converted into the office entrance. Denny mounted it pretty briskly. Neither Button nor Sprid, however, was in attendance. Denny wasn't going to trust his business to any understrappers; and finding that it might be some time before either of the partners returned, he determined to go and transact a little business at the mills, and then come back again.

Hardly had he closed the office-door, when the clerks inside heard a great clatter on the stairs and the noise of a heavy fall. They ran out, and found that Denny was lying on his back, half on the stairs, and half on the stone slab at the bottom. They went down and picked him up; but he only moved once, and whispered something that the man who supported his head thought was 'codicil.'

Charlie Blake had walked into Hutton's office a pauper, he left it a wealthy man; with a life-interest in the Manor farm, and thirty thousand pounds invested in the Silverbridge bank, besides stocks and shares, and odd investments scattered here and there. He didn't know for a long time how much he really was worth; for vouchers and securities kept cropping up in all kinds of unsuspected places. Charlie gave old Denny a handsome funeral, and put up a fine marble monument to him in the parish church. He never knew how very near a thing it was, his gain of this inheritance. Hutton, knowing Denny as he did, when he heard of his visit to Button and Company, divined what his real purpose was; and not till he found that Denny had transacted no business at their office that morning, did he feel quite sure of Charlie's good-fortune.

After some negotiation with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, Charlie succeeded in buying the reversion of the Manor farm, and built a new house on a pleasant slope overlooking the river and a stretch of wooded valley. Long before the house was finished, however, the bells of Silverbridge celebrated in joyous peals the double wedding of the Blakes and the Huttons. Charlie gave his sister a handsome portion on her marriage with Tom Blake, and Hutton settled a nice little sum on his daughter Fanny.

Bob the pony was turned out to grass in the home paddock, for the rest of his life; and the pony-chair was kept in the coach-house as a memorial of Denny, and is often used to this day by the young Blakes, when they play at coach-and-horses in the stable-yard.

Now that Charles is rich, everybody speaks well of him; he wins prizes at agricultural shows, takes the chair at public dinners, is an active magistrate, and energetic sportsman; and perhaps would be inclined to give himself airs, but for his sister Mary,

who takes him down when he gets too important, and persists in reminding him that he is, after all, only a successful humbug—whereat Fanny Blake is vastly indignant.

THE LIFE OF FLOWERS.

Nulla planta sine animâ (No plant without a soul), Aristotle is said to have observed. The proposition can certainly not be maintained on scientific grounds; and even the great German poet, who glorifies the flowers as 'decked with the hues of a splendour divine,' is obliged at last to address to them the invocation:

Weep, kindly children of the Spring,
To you has Heaven a soul denied.

Yet, for the imagination and the feelings, there is a sense in which the saying is true. We are in the habit of imputing to flowers a sort of *personality*, in a much higher degree than to other inanimate things. It is not only that the love we bear them for their beauty, their frailty, and tenderness, lifts them above the category of *things*, to rank them in a higher; they have so much more to say to the feelings, and say it so much more specially, than any other class of natural objects, that we get to speak of them in terms descriptive not merely of form, size, colour, bearing, &c. but in such as attribute to them personal character, human qualities and passions. Each one seems to breathe a sentiment and speak a language of its own. We need not go to the poets for proof and illustration of our point; the language of common life will supply us with both. It does not restrict itself to such epithets as tall, stately, slender, and the like, in referring to the flowers; we hear of the flaunting foxglove, the lowly violet, the modest daisy, the deadly nightshade, the weeping willow. Sometimes the name itself, without the addition of any adjective, bears witness to some single, distinct, and powerful impression of qualities in the plant, other than those which appeal to the senses. Day's-eye, eyebright, nightshade, are all of this class. We know not how and when such names came into being; but we all feel their fitness. They must have had some single inventor, we suppose, but the universal acceptance of them is a proof of the sameness and universality of the impression made by each individual flower upon the common heart and imagination. Nay, sometimes even Science itself yields to the fascination, and in reconstructing floral nomenclature for its own purposes, instead of conferring upon a plant a name founded upon some characteristic peculiarity (*differentia*, as the logicians say), which shall serve as a basis for classification into order, genus, species, it does but translate the old poetical name, or embody the conception it conveys under a new image. Thus the magnificent plant with the lurid blossoms, and the black, luscious, poisonous berries, which presented itself to the imagination of our forefathers as some baleful shadow of night, beneath which 'all life expires,' becomes in scientific terminology *Atropa Belladonna*, which we shall venture

to translate as 'Fate-fraught, beautiful Damsel.' Science recognises the truth of the idea expressed by the old name, but does justice to the incomparable beauty of this the largest of the English herbaceous plants (not excepting the burdock), in size and aspect the real queen of the woods. *Atropa Belladonna*! It suggests some Florentine countess of the middle ages with dark, alluring eyes, who 'wooed but to destroy,' subtle, poisonous perfumes exhaling from her luxuriant hair!

But to descend from the realms of fancy to those of fact, there really are many phenomena connected with the life of plants closely resembling those of animal, not to say of conscious existence. The pimpernel, prescient of the coming shower, closes its petals an hour or two before it descends; the sensitive plant shrinks from a foreign touch, and huddles its pairs of leaflets together, as if cowering under the presence of a foe; the water-lilies, at the approach of evening, draw down their white or yellow heads beneath the surface, and so await the return of day. Such phenomena are usually referred to automatic movement. But call them what we will, they are the first faint suggestions, the dim prophecies of that fully developed, glorious consciousness, of which the complex and magnificent phenomena of intellect and will are part and parcel. The plant-life is but the life of man in its elementary and undeveloped state.

We might go a little farther, without losing hold of the ground of safe speculation. The flowers are planted by the roots fast down in the earth; yet, through the stiffest clay and marl, winding round rocks, displacing stones, they struggle upwards to the light of day. By a similar necessity, man, too, climbs upwards towards the ideal. The soul is uncontented with what is low and dark, and, like the plant, struggles towards the heaven of truth, and the light of God's presence.

Once more, how nearly the plant-life resembles our own in its periods, its seasons, its epochs! Like us, they have their period of childhood, in which they put forth buds only; in youth, they attain to fuller beauty and strength; in the ripe autumn of their days, they bring their fruit to perfection; and then fade away. As their vital energies, between the beginning and end of their lives, first grow, and then decline, so each individual day witnesses a corresponding waxing and waning. With sunrise, they awaken, bloom airily throughout the day; and, like us, shut their eyes wearily together, when the night is come.

At the approach of Night all Nature puts on an attitude of expectation. A deep silence settles down on lands, and woods, and waters. Hushed are all the living creatures that with song, or hum, and thousandfold other voices of restlessness, or passion, or pain, made vocal the hours of day. They all slumber: in the high grass, on lofty boughs, or wheresoever they have built their houses, nests, or other habitations. Over the whole plant-kingdom, too, has the Night poured out the cup of her drowsy enchantments. Vanished are all the flowers which in the sunlight beamed upon us like merry, laughing, joyous human faces. Here and there, a single one lingers half-open in the deepening shades. But most of them have folded their petals close together, and returned to the bud-like form of their infancy; just as human faces in sleep put off the marks of thought, and

caro, and guilt, and wear once more childhood's look of innocence and calm.

This phenomenon is called the *sleep of plants*, which, supposing that they really sleep, have certainly different *manners* of sleeping. To speak familiarly, some go to sleep with their eyes open, others with their eyes shut. They do not all fold their petals close together, in the manner we have described; but all exhibit sleep-phenomena of some kind. Of those which do thus close and assume the bud-form, the various species of the Composite family are the most numerous, and, by reason of their bright yellow and white, or wholly yellow flowers, the most conspicuous. Members of this family are the Dandelion, Daisy, Hawkbit, Hawkweed, and Cat's Ear. Our readers may soon see for themselves (if they have not noticed already) how the ligulate florets of the ray, at the approach of night, close up over the tubular florets of the disk, like some fond mother bending over a child, and lulling it to sleep.

But monopetalous flowers—those whose corolla is formed of a single piece—cannot do this. They keep their corolla open by night, as by day; but they do not wholly resist the soothing sleep-suggestions of the darkness, nevertheless. See how the foxglove and the stately mullein droop their proud heads, like a man thoroughly tired by a long day's toil or travel; and how the Euphorbias, or the masses of tiny-flowered wood-gallium, bend their blossoms towards each other, like a group of children crouching together for mutual warmth and comfort during nocturnal cold and rain! So, too, like children seeking protection beneath their mother's apron, the tender blossoms of the touch-me-not balsam at night-fall cover and hide beneath their own leaves. The phenomena of plant-life, then, during the night are diverse; but all remind us of something human, and, generally, of something connected with sleep.

But, again, this so-called sleep of plants extends to all their parts; to the foliage-leaves, for instance. In general, they press more closely to the stem; some fold up like the flower; others hang more loosely on to the stem, and lie one over another, just as our limbs are prone to dispose themselves when the tension of the muscles is relaxed in slumber. In this manner, the feather-like leaflets of the Mimosas, Acacias, Cassias, and of all similar Papilionaceous plants, arrange themselves by night; while the leaves of the trefoil, and still more of the wood-sorrel, cling together by the edges, and remain thus till daylight.

Besides these day-flowers, there are *Night-flowers*, chiefly tropical. These are generally very short-lived. They will bloom, and load the air with perfume a summer's night through, and then drop off. Of night-flowers, the most magnificent and striking is the *Cereus grandiflora*, or Night-blowing Cereus. At about midnight, its broad white blossoms, six or eight inches in diameter, burst forth so suddenly that you can almost see them unfold. At the same instant, the conservatory is filled with a delicious odour, which we have heard compared to vanilla.

We cannot end more satisfactorily this little essay upon flowers than with Heinrich Heine's beautiful words about their odours: 'Odours are the *feelings* of flowers; and as the human heart in the night-time, when it believes itself alone and unlistened to, feels more profoundly than by day; so the flowers,

too modest to utter themselves in the light, seem to wait for the covering of darkness to express their feelings completely, and breathe them out in soft odours.

ODDS AND ENDS:

FROM DR ROBERT CHAMBERS'S SCRAP-BOOK.

AN ALARMING THEODOLITE.—In my young days, a Mr Kinghorn visited Peebles to take a survey of the country, with a view to the construction of a railway along the vale of Tweed from Berwick to Glasgow. The appearance of his theodolite caused a considerable sensation among the less instructed members of the community. It was confidently whispered about, that the theodolite turned people upside down. Some women were desperately alarmed at the possibility of being brought within its line of vision. My mother had a servant-girl who was afraid to venture out of doors when the theodolite made its appearances. I remember my father and Mr Kinghorn heartily laughing at the circumstance. I am reminded of this droll affair by a fact related in Mr Hay's work on *Western Barbary*, where similar apprehensions have been entertained respecting a telescope. The writer says: 'Such is the ignorance of European art among all classes in Barbary, that, some years ago, a resident of Tangiers having in his possession an astronomical telescope which inverted the objects, and having exhibited it to some Moorish neighbours, it was bruited about that the Nazarene possessed a glass through which he looked at the Moorish women on their terrace, and that this instrument had the power of turning the ladies upside down! Information was sent to the court, shewing the impropriety of Christians being allowed to make use of such magic art; whereupon a mandate was despatched from the Sultan to the governor of Tangiers, directing that the importation of such instruments should be strictly prohibited, and that the Nazarene who possessed the telescope should be summoned to deliver it up to the authorities for their examination, and called to account for his shameless proceeding!'

VISIT TO MISS PORTER.—(July 4, 1845.) Accompanied Mrs Hall to a house in Kensington Square, to be introduced to Miss Porter. Tall, thin old lady, reclining on a sofa. Weakly health. Above seventy. Kindly Scottish manners. We talked of her young days spent in Surgeons' Square, Edinburgh. Her mother occupied part of the long house on the south side of the square—the west half; Lady Henderson the other. Knew the Kerrs of Chatto as neighbours. Miss Porter, when a little girl, saw one day a thin elderly gentleman, in a light-coloured coat with a plaid, in the square. Went up to him, and said he was like her grandpapa, and for that reason asked him to come in. He followed her into the house, where she introduced him to her mother, as being so like grandpapa. He fell into conversation about the army, led to it by seeing the sword of Miss Porter's father over the fire-place. He said he had also been a soldier: having fallen in love with his mother's waiting-maid, he had taken to that life in consequence of a quarrel with his friends. He had been at the battle of Culloden, and mention of this seemed greatly to affect him. By-and-by, he

went away. It should be mentioned that Miss Porter, on taking his hand at first, had observed it to be small, thin, and blue-veined like a lady's. A few days after, a young medical student, visiting Mrs Porter's, mentioned the curious circumstance, that an old gentleman had been run over by a wagon in the streets, had been carried to the infirmary, and was there found to be a female. It was afterwards learned that this singular person was the sister of a clergyman, a person of good connections, who had a slight craze, and believed himself to be Jenny Cameron, of whom an untrue scandal had been reported. The injured female died in the infirmary.

Miss Porter's brother, Robert, when a mere child, had been taken to drink tea with some of the rest of the family, in a house where they met Flora Macdonald. A picture attracted his attention, and he shewed a curiosity to see it nearer. Flora put him upon a chair to see it, told him it was the battle of Preston, and gave him some explanations about it. This, he used to acknowledge afterwards, was his first lesson in historical painting.

Lady Anne Barnard told Miss Porter that she had written *Auld Robin Gray*, in order to raise a little money for the succour of an old nurse, having no other means. She had heard from her music-master, that so much as five pounds was sometimes got for a successful song, and she thought she would try. It was successful in the object. Lady Anne wrote much poetry besides, which is preserved by one of her relations. [The Miss Porter above referred to was Jane, authoress of *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and the *Scottish Chiefs*. She died 1850.]

ON THE CLIFF.

Half down the cliff the pathway ends,
The rocks grow steep and sheer;
Hard by a sudden stream descends;
From ledge to ledge, with breaks and heads,
It dashes cool and clear.

Across the bay green ripples flow
In endless falls and swells;
Clear shew the ribbed sea-flow below,
And round dark rocks in whiteness glow
Smooth sands of crisped shells.

Foam-specks before the wind that glide,
The sleeping sea-gulls float:
Amid eve's crimson shadows wide,
Rocked softly by the swaying tide,
Yet safe as anchored boat.

Their white and folded wings are laid
On tides that change and flow;
Tho daylight passes into shade;
Yet calm they rest, and unafraid,
Whate'er may come and go.

So safe, 'mid waste of waters wide,
Below the darkening eky,
So safe my heart and I may bide,
Calm floating on time's changeful tide,
Beneath eternity.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.
Also sold by all Booksellers.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 544.

SATURDAY, MAY 30, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

A. D R A W !

An old friend of ours happens to possess a country residence amidst grounds more than ordinarily beautiful. There are lawns, trees, walks, gardens, and a sparkling rivulet from the hills pouring in cascades down a picturesque dell environed by shrubbery and wild-flowers. With a southern exposure, the sun shines bounteously on the scene. A kind of earthly paradise, you would say. What more could be wanted? Our friend, a little restless in his plans, was not satisfied. There was one thing he would like. A pond. Without that the place was deficient. If he could manage to make a pretty little pond, for the disporting of minnows and gold-fish, the thing would be complete. No sooner was this resolved on than it was accomplished, though at considerable expense. Circular in form, the pond was twenty feet in diameter and three feet deep, with a bed of fine river-gravel. A rill of water poured through it to keep it fresh. It had a margin of green turf all round, and in the middle there was a lovely miniature island for water-plants. As a convenient means of contemplating the beauty of the small sheet of water and its surroundings, and at the same time enjoying the air and sunshine, a rustic bower embellished with heliotropes was placed near at hand within view. It took a year to bring matters to perfection. Some fifty pounds had been expended. The grounds were at length unimprovable.

Our friend was not a naturalist. He was ignorant or forgetful of the attractive qualities of a settled piece of water, although no more than twenty feet in diameter. When the pond was put in working order, there sprung up suddenly an extraordinary demonstration of a certain department of animal life. A visitation of birds would have been enjoyable rather than otherwise, even at the sacrifice of the peas and the fruit. The plague was of a totally different kind. It was the plague of frogs and toads of all sorts and sizes. Yellow, brown, streaked, mottled, rough-skinned and smooth-skinned, big and little, hopping, crawl-

ing, or composedly resting to look about them. There they were. You saw them waddling along the gravel walks, or crossing the grass-plots. Hedges, ditches, and ploughed fields were no impediment to their eager locomotion. They were determined to get on. From all quarters, hill and dale, they made their appearance, as if under a powerful impulse of migration. It was evident, from the course they pursued, that the newly made pond was what they were bound for. Every one of them had somehow become acquainted with the fact of its existence. Intelligence regarding the pond had spread in all the frog and toad communities within a radius of several miles, and there was a general hurrying off in consequence. The small slip of water was speedily swarming. The minnows and gold-fish as authorised inhabitants were lost amidst a crowd of reptiles. Tadpoles were scooped out by the bucketful. Too late, our friend discovered that the pond was a *Draw*. Thoughtlessly he had brought on himself a heavy infliction.

What was to be done? The gardener, a canny Scot from the Howe of the Mearns, gave it as his opinion, though he was late in giving it, 'that, wherever there is a pond, there will be frogs. They come to it from far and near by instinct. It is their nature, sir. I doubt it is no use trying to keep them out.' Discouraged, our friend did not at once throw up the game. He bethought himself of surrounding the pond with a close wire-trellis, two feet high. The trellis was procured, and put in position. The expedient was unavailing. The frog and toad world kept travelling pondward the same as ever. On arriving in their march at the wire barricade, they were certainly disconcerted. They had not calculated on the obstruction. Yet, it did not altogether daunt them. Seating themselves all round, they looked wistfully through the trellis, and considered what steps should be taken to gain access to the glistening pool, the object of their longing desires. Some few, weakly and discouraged, after a time turned their backs in despair. Others more adventurous, maintained the siege, and like a forlorn-hope,

clambered up the trellis—no easy thing to do—reached the summit, and with, as we may suppose, a thrill of triumph, dashed into the pond. According to last accounts, our friend is almost at his wits' end. The *Batrachia*, in their various genera and species, have successfully baffled him. 'Wherever there is a pond, there will be frogs.' He now knows the force of this piece of information in natural history, and wishes he had known it, or remembered it sooner. The conclusion he is likely to arrive at, is, that the only way of getting rid of the frogs is, to extinguish the pond!

We have described these whimsical experiences in creating what proved a Draw for a certain variety of vermin, not without a hope of possibly suggesting reflections on a point in social economy which seems to be generally neglected. We mean the ever-extending practice of making large towns a harbourage and place of charitable succour to masses of people who, lost to a sense of self-dependence, throw themselves on the bounty of others. In point of fact, every city is made a Draw. The refuge is ready to hand, and so are benefactions, of various kinds, but medical charities in particular. At one time, not beyond remembrance, the principle inculcated was the necessity of working to secure the ordinary comforts of life. The young were told to be industrious, to strive to push on in the world, to endeavour to be self-supporting; they were reminded of the old saying, that 'the hand of the diligent maketh rich.' Franklin, it may be recollected, quotes as the result of his own early struggles: 'Seest thou a man diligent in his calling, he shall stand before kings.' That would now be considered a very old-fashioned doctrine. The modern view of things is, not to make any great effort to advance in the line of life you adopt; not to strive or compete; not for a moment to think of working hard, or getting an inch before the least skilled of your fellows. On the contrary, you are just to labour as little as you decently can; to insist on being at your work not above eight hours a day; to have as many holidays or half-holidays as possible; to take matters easily; to live well, and save nothing. If you are ill, never think of paying for a doctor. Trust to hospitals and dispensaries, to which, of course, you will have more sense than ever subscribe a single halfpenny. Keep in mind there are numbers of silly wealthy people, who will somehow look after you and your family when anything like difficulties arise.

If the bulk of the general population are not told thus plainly out in so many words, they can infer that such is meant, through the heedless proceedings of philanthropically disposed societies and individuals, who as much as say: 'Be half-idle, and we will take the consequences.' Are the results of this new gospel not visible in the condition of every populous city? Idleness and misexpenditure under the name of recreation. Self-instruction neglected, notwithstanding the numerous opportunities offered for mental im-

provement. The teachings of history and political economy hooted down as absurd. Houses in a semi-ruined, or at least degraded state, crammed, not with helpless paupers, broken down by unavoidable misfortune, who should invite compassion—but with the idle, the dissolute, the habitually dependent on all sorts of benevolences! For these, the town, with its obscure and miscellaneous dens, which ought not to be in existence, is a mighty Draw. They have flocked to it, and huddled themselves into it, by as sure an instinct as that which attracted the frogs to the pond.

The mightiest of all our civic Draws is the metropolis, with its prodigious population of three millions and a half. How many fall within the succour of the poor-law administration, we do not stop to inquire. The fact that seems most startling is, that 'eight hundred thousand individuals, or about one in four of the population, apply annually to the hospitals and the dispensaries for relief.'* One in four, in the wealthiest city in the world, asking and getting medicine and medical advice for nothing! If anything could open the eyes of the public to the folly of countenancing a gigantic system of demoralisation in the name of charity, this should. It would be interesting to see an analysis of the various classes of persons who throw themselves on this species of extravagant benevolence. What are their means of subsistence, in what kind of houses do they dwell, how do they dress, and spend their money? We can contribute a fact towards the inquiry. In the newspaper obituaries, are constantly seen notices of deaths in the public infirmaries, which notices have of course been paid for by relatives of the deceased. That is to say, there are people of good means so shabby as to let their relations die in an hospital supported by voluntary contribution.

It can scarcely be called a wholesome social system, when one part of the community takes in hand to pet, flatter, and coddle the other. Yet, that is pretty much what we have come to. So strongly has the propriety of pampering got hold of the public mind, that the attempt to raise any objection to the process would probably be as unpopular as futile. Benevolent institutions once set on foot, and popularised, do not vanish at a bidding. Some time ago, a chief magistrate in a large town attempted the very moderate reform of consolidating charities and lessening their number. For civility's sake, the design was applauded, but it proved a failure. There were vested interests in the way. Each organisation had its friends, supporters, managers; so, after a due amount of inquiry and talk, the project was dropped. The respective organisations, though often differing only a shade from each other, remain undisturbed, each with its collecting-book as usual. In such matters prescriptive pecuniary

* See an article on the Medical Charities of London, in the *Quarterly Review* for April: we commend it to the perusal of our readers.

interests are not alone accountable. Short-sighted crotchets are seriously concerned. One man has a craze for distributing bread and soup, another for giving away quantities of coal. These excellent persons do not perceive that, while possibly doing a little good, they are injuriously strengthening the attractions hold out to the recklessly dependent classes. The wholesale mischief outdoes the individual benefit. Every fresh centre of gratuitous distribution is an additional Draw. And so, big towns swarm with an increasing shoal of the parasitic and demoralised, till every hole and corner is choked, and they become a general oppression and terror.

Police judges—the cleverest among them—are incompetent to deal with beings so unruly, and regardless of either admonition or punishment. The evil is done, and it is not the function, nor in the power of judges to undo it. Sabbath bells are ringing. Magistrates are gravely walking in their official robes to church. Happy land, where all is so proper and decorous! There is not a member of that ceremonious procession who could not pitch a pouny-piece into lanes little better than the regions of heathendom, and where, at this instant, all laws and regulations to the contrary, there prevail scenes of foul revelry and disorder. Imprisonment! The very prison, as now constituted, is a Draw. It gives bed, board, washing, and doctoring, free of care or expense. A short retirement now and then is agreeable. Three months not objected to. 'Do not be lenient with me, sir,' said a middle-aged woman, lately addressing a police-judge when he was about to pass sentence on her for being disorderly. 'Give me a good long imprisonment. I like the prison. It does me good!' There is such a thing as being below a sense of shame or degradation:

Let them prate about decorum
Who have characters to lose!

Does society, in this nineteenth century of ours, imagine it is without blame in complacently seeing all this growing up and flourishing under a multiplicity of attractions and encouragements?

Some few years ago, in an extra paroxysm of philanthropy, there was a rage for getting up what were called Nightly Shelters—places where some food, warmth, and a night's lodging could be had for nothing. It was a benevolent but mistaken idea, for it did not take into account the dependent quality in human nature. Towns within twenty miles or so, of each other were provided with Shelters. As if by magic, every Shelter was a Draw. The whole of trampdom was on the move. Groups of men, wives, and children took a sudden fancy for travelling. Their pedestrian excursions were delightful. All they had to do, to enjoy air, exercise, and a pleasant variety, was to circulate from town to town, get free quarters with food every evening—Saturday to Monday two evenings, with some intermediate indulgence—and thus contentedly make their rounds at the public expense. The thing was obviously too bad to last. Subscribers took the alarm. They saw, that in humanely trying to succour a few homeless beings, they were actually creating vagrants by the hundred—turning crowds of men, women, and children into a kind of gipsies. Without saying much about the failure of the project, the Shelters were shut up. The Draw was stopped.

Walker, a man of shrewd observation, with a knowledge of London character, says in his work, *The Original*, that if you were to lay down on their sides a row of empty sugar-hogsheads in Whitechapel, the chances are that each hogshead within four-and-twenty hours would be the dwelling of a family. Perhaps that was taking an extreme view of the proneness to nestle in quarters open for intrusion. But it is true in the main. If you wish to have frogs, make a pond. If you wish to have about you a dissolute helpless class of beings, give them house-room. They will not be nice as to accommodation. The absence of comfort is compensated by drams or beer—it is all one. Begging, or a trifling job now and then, with a wild scramble for any public charities that may be going, will suffice. At the worst, by keeping for a few years within a determinate parish, the rates and the Workhouse are an inheritance legally secured.

It seems to matter little whether cities are built to endure for hundreds of years, or only for a century. The tall black buildings of Edinburgh, and the slender brick edifices in the meaner parts of London, alike drift into rookeries of disease, crime, and disorder. Everywhere there are people to buy or lease half-ruinous tenements with a view to let them out in small portions. Some one has graphically styled them 'ruins' lords.' They are the perpetuators of old houses which from public policy it would be merciful to sweep away. Only those who have visited the interiors of these dismal abodes, can form an opinion of their degradation. We have known a family inhabiting a dungeon without a window, and as dark as midnight; and have seen a single apartment divided into two for separate families by a partition of brown paper. It will perhaps be counselled, erect proper dwellings for this abject order of inhabitants. No one in his senses would do so. Nothing but the constant vigilance of a ruins' lord can extort a farthing of rent, or prevent doors, window-shutters, and even flooring, from being torn up for firewood. We speak not here of the thrifty and well-disposed among the manual-labouring classes. Where not spoiled by petting or tutelage, and left to their own ingenuity, they are able to build or buy houses for themselves; and this they are doing on a comprehensive scale when land is available. Interference with movements of this nature would only do harm. That which clearly calls for reprobation, is the accumulation of downright wretchedness, by encouraging idleness and misexpenditure, and mistakingly holding out the inducement of numerous charities, or the more palpable attraction of a degraded and unwholesome species of dwellings.

Substantially, these dismal habitations, which we faintly picture, constitute an altogether irresistible Draw. The needy and able-bodied improvident flock to them from all quarters; while for those on the spot, whose fancy, according to modern maxims, is to work as little and drink as much as possible, they present a convenient receptacle in which they may hide themselves from public scrutiny. The Improvement Acts of Glasgow and Edinburgh, recently referred to by Mr Kay-Shuttleworth in the House of Commons, proceeded on a full understanding of the necessity of destroying such odious haunts; and are acknowledged to be successful so far as they go. But for clamorous opposition, the success would have been considerably greater. Better

proof of the propriety of clearing away semi-ruinous resorts could scarcely be advanced. If you wish to banish frogs, extinguish your pond—if to be freed from a host of parasitic and dissolute idlers, cease to attract them or give them harbourage.

W. C.

COLOUR IN ANIMALS.

THE variety of colouring in animal life is one of the marvels of nature, only now beginning to be studied scientifically. It is vain to say that an animal is beautiful, either in symmetry or diversity of colour, in order to please the human eye. Fishes in the depths of the Indian seas, where no human eye can see them, possess the most gorgeous tints. One thing is remarkable: birds, fishes, and insects alone possess the metallic colouring; whilst plants and zoophytes are without reflecting shades. The mollusca take a middle path with their hue of mother-of-pearl. What is the reason of these arrangements in the animal kingdom? It is a question which cannot be satisfactorily answered; but some observations have been made which throw light on the subject. One is, that among animals, the part of the body turned towards the earth is always paler than that which is uppermost. The action of light is here apparent. Fishes which live on the side, as the sole and turbot, have the left side, which answers to the back, of a dark tint; whilst the other side is white. It may be noticed that birds which fly, as it were, bathed in light do not offer the strong contrast of tone between the upper and lower side. Beetles, wasps, and flies have the metallic colouring of blue and green, possess rings equally dark all round the body; and the wings of many butterflies are as beautifully feathered below as above.

On the other hand, mollusca which live in an almost closed shell, like the oyster, are nearly colourless; the larvae of insects found in the ground or in wood have the same whiteness, as well as all intestinal worms shut up in obscurity. Some insects whose life is spent in darkness keep this appearance all their lives; such as the curious little beetles inhabiting the inaccessible crevasses of snowy mountains, in whose depths they are hidden. They seem to fly from light as from death, and are only found at certain seasons, when they crawl on the flooring of the caves like larvae, without eyes, which would be useless in the retreats where they usually dwell.

This relation between colouring and light is very evident in the beings which inhabit the earth and the air; those are the most brilliant which are exposed to the sun; those of the tropics are brighter than in the regions around the North Pole, and the diurnal species than the nocturnal; but the same law does not apparently belong to the inhabitants of the sea, which are of a richer shade where the light is more tempered. The most dazzling corals are those which hang under the natural cornices of the rocks and on the sides of submarine grottos; while some kinds of fish which are

found on the shores as well as in depths requiring the drag-net, have a bright red purple in the latter regions, and an insignificant yellow brown in the former. Those who bring up gold-fish know well that to have them finely coloured, they must place them in a shaded vase, where aquatic plants hide them from the extreme solar heat. Under a hot July sun they lose their beauty.

The causes to which animal colouring is due are very various. Some living substances have it in themselves, owing to molecular arrangement, but usually this is not the case; the liveliest colours are not bound up with the tissues. Sometimes they arise from a phenomenon like that by which the soap-bubble shews its prismatic hues; sometimes there is a special matter called pigment which is united with the organic substance. Such is the brilliant paint, carmine, which is the pigment of the cochineal insect, and the red colour of blood, which may be collected in crystals, separate from the other particles to which it is united.

Even the powder not unknown to ladies of fashion is one of Nature's beautifying means. That which is left on the hands of the ruthless boy when he has caught a butterfly, is a common instance; but there are birds, such as the large white cockatoo, which leave a white powder on the hands. An African traveller speaks of his astonishment on a rainy day to see his hands reddened by the moist plumage of a bird he had just killed. The most ordinary way, however, in which the pigment is found is when it exists in the depths of the tissues, reduced to very fine particles, best seen under the microscope. When scattered, they scarcely influence the shade; but when close together, they are very perceptible. This explains the colour of the negro: under the very delicate layer of skin which is raised by a slight burn there may be seen abundance of brown pigment in the black man. It is quite superficial, for the skin differs only from that of the European in tone; it wants the exquisite transparency of fair races. Among those, the colours which impress the eye do not come from a flat surface, but from the different depths of layers in the flesh. Hence the variety of rose and lily tints according as the blood circulates more or less freely; hence the blue veins, which give a false appearance, because the blood is red; but the skin thus dyed the deep tones which lie beneath it; tattooing with Indian ink is blue, blue eyes owe their shade to the brown pigment which lines the other side of the iris, and the muscles seen under the skin produce the bluish tone well known to painters.

The chemical nature of pigment is little known; the sun evidently favours its development in red patches. Age takes it away from the hair when it turns white, the colouring-matter giving place to very small air-bubbles. The brilliant white of feathers is due to the air which fills them. Age, and domestic habits exchanged for a wild state, alter the appearance of many birds and animals; in some species the feathers and fur grow white every year before falling off and being renewed; as in the ermine, in spring the fur which is so valued assumes a yellow hue, and after a few months, becomes white before winter.

It would, however, be an error to suppose that

all the exquisite metallic shades which diaper the feathers of birds and the wings of butterflies arise from pigments; it was a dream of the alchemists to try to extract them. Their sole cause is the play of light, fugitive as the sparkles of the diamond. When the beautiful feathers on the breast of a humming-bird are examined under the microscope, it is astonishing to see none of the shades the mystery of which you would penetrate. They are simply made of a dark-brown opaque substance not unlike those of a black duck. There is, however, a remarkable arrangement; the barb of the feather, instead of being a fringed stem, offers a series of small squares of horny substance placed point to point. These plates, of infinitesimal size, are extremely thin, brown, and, to all appearance, exactly alike, whatever may be the reflection they give. The brilliant large feathers of the peacock are the same; the plates are only at a greater distance, and of less brightness. They have been described as so many little mirrors, but that comparison is not correct, for then they would only give back light without colouring it. Neither do they act by decomposing the rays which pass through them, for then they would not lose their iris tints under the microscope. It is to metals alone that the metallic plumage of the humming-birds can be compared; the effects of the plates in a feather are like tempered steel or crystallised bismuth. Certain specimens emit colours very variable under different angles, the same scarlet feather becoming, when turned to ninety degrees, a beautiful emerald green.

The same process which nature has followed in the humming-bird is also found in the wing of the butterfly. It is covered with microscopic scales, which play the part of the feather, arranged like the tiles of a house, and taking the most elegant forms. They also lose their colour under magnifying power, and the quality of reflection shows that the phenomena are the same as in feathers. There is, however, a difference in the extent of the chromatic scale. Whilst the humming-bird partakes in its colours of the whole of the spectrum from the violet to the red, passing through green, those of the butterfly prefer the more refrangible ones from green to violet, passing through blue. The admirable lilac shade of the *Morpho menelas* and the *Morpho cypris* is well known, and the wings of these butterflies have been used by the jewellers, carefully laid under a thin plate of mica, and made into ornaments. A bright green is not uncommon, but the metallic red is rare, excepting in a beautiful butterfly of Madagascar, closely allied to one found in India and Ceylon. The latter has wings of a velvet black with brilliant green spots; in the former, these give place to a mark of fiery red.

There is the same difference between the metallic hues of creatures endowed with flight and the iris shades of fishes, that there is between crystallised bismuth and the soft reflections of the changing opal. To have an idea of the richness of the fish, it is only necessary to see a net landed filled with shad or other bright fish. It is one immense opal, with the same transparency of shade seen through the scales, which afford the only means of imitating pearls. It is due, however, not to the scales, but to extremely thin layers lying below the scales under the skin and round the blood-vessels, which look like so many threads of silver running through the flesh. Réaumur first noticed and described

them; sometimes their form is as regular as that of a crystal, and of infinitesimal size and thickness. The art of the makers of false pearls is to collect these plates in a mass from the fish, and make a paste of them with the addition of glue, which is pompously named 'Eastern Essence.' This is put inside glass beads, and gives them the native whiteness of pearls.

Many observations have been made lately by our naturalists as to the defence which colour supplies to animals: hares, rabbits, stags, and goats possess the most favourable shade for concealing them in the depths of the forest or in the fields. It is well known that when the Volunteer corps were enrolled, and the most suitable colour for the riflemen was discussed, it was supposed to be green. Soldiers dressed in different shades were placed in woods and plains, to try which offered the best concealment. Contrary to expectation, that which escaped the eyes of the enemy was not green, but the fawn colour of the doe. Among hunting quadrupeds, such as the tiger, the leopard, the jaguar, the panther, there is a shade of skin which man has always been anxious to appropriate for his own use. The old Egyptian tombs have paintings of the negroes of Sudan, their loins girt with the fine yellow skins for which there is still a great sale. All the birds which prey upon the smaller tribes, and fishes like the shark, are clothed in dead colours, so as to be the least seen by their victims.

There is an animal which, for two thousand years, has excited the curiosity and superstition of man by its change of colour—that is, the chameleon. No reasonable observation was ever made upon it, until Perrault instituted some experiments in the seventeenth century. He observed that the animal became pale at night, and took a deeper colour when in the sun, or when it was teased; whilst the idea that it took its colour from surrounding objects was simply fabulous. He wrapped it in different kinds of cloth, and once only did it become paler when in white. Its colours were very limited, varying from gray to green and greenish brown.

Little more than this is known in the present day: under our skies it soon loses its intensity of colour. Beneath the African sun, its livery is incessantly changing; sometimes a row of large patches appears on the sides, or the skin is spotted like a trout, the spots turning to the size of a pin's head. At other times, the figures are light on a brown ground, which a moment before were brown on a light ground, and these last during the day. A naturalist speaks of two chameleons which were tied together on a boat in the Nile, with sufficient length of string to run about, and so always submissive to the same influences of light, &c. They offered a contrast of colour, though to a certain degree alike; but when they slept under the straw chair which they chose for their domicile, they were exactly of the same shade during the hours of rest—a fine sea-green that never changed. The skin rested, as did the brain, so that it seemed probable that central activity, thought, will, or whatever name is given, has some effect in the change of colour. The probability is, that as they become pale, the pigment does not leave the skin, but that it is collected in spheres too small to affect our retina, which will be impressed by the same quantity of pigment when more extended.

It is undoubtedly the nerves which connect the brain with organs where the pigment is retained. By cutting a nerve, the colouring-matter is paralysed in that portion of the skin through which the nerve passes, just as a muscle is isolated by the section of its nerve. If this operation be performed on a turbot when in a dark state, and thrown into a sandy bottom, the whole body grows paler, excepting the part which cannot receive cerebral influence. The nerves have, in general, a very simple and regular distribution: if two or three of these are cut in the body of the fish, a black transversal band following the course of the nerve will be seen; whilst, if the nerve which animates the head is thus treated, the turbot growing paler on the sand, keeps a kind of black mask, which has a very curious effect.

These marks will remain for many weeks, and what may be called paralysis of colour has been remarked in consequence of illness or accident. Such was seen in the head of a large turbot, the body being of a different colour. It was watched, and died after a few days, evidently of some injury which it had received. The subject offers a field of immense inquiry: the chemical and physical study of pigments, the conditions which regulate their appearance, their intensity, and variations under certain influences; the want of them in albinos, and the exaggerated development in other forms of disease. To Mr Darwin, in England, and to M. Ponchet, in France, the subject is indebted for much research, which will no doubt be continued as occasion offers.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER XXXII.—THE SECRET WITNESS.

'That's it, madam, nothing less,' observed Blake, with brutal coolness, after a short pause, during which Maggie for the first time withdrew her eyes from his, and fixed them on the ground.

'Tis just murder that this excellent husband of yours has committed; and as though even that were not enough, the man he has killed was his own brother. Do you hear that?'

'I hear you say so,' was Maggie's answer, delivered in such unmoved tones that they surprised herself. Her weakness had been but momentary, and now that she was face to face with the worst, she felt the courage of despair.

'You'd be game to the last, I knew,' continued Blake, with a sort of grudging admiration; 'or it may be that, so far as I have gone as yet, you may think me a liar. One of that trade, however, it ought to strike you, would not have told you so improbable a story—would have stuck to something a little less strong, but more like truth.'

It did so strike her; and though she did not believe the fact—she would as easily have been persuaded that the sun was black, as that John Milbank was a murderer—she did believe that Dennis Blake was stating what he deemed was true. Remembering what her last reply had cost her, she answered him by a haughty gesture expressive of incredulity and contempt.

'Well, it is something that one can get you to

listen,' continued the other dryly; 'that you don't fly out, as some fools would in your case, into a passion and clamour that would ruin all. I always thought you a sensible woman, except as regarded Master Dick—There, there; I'll say no more about that, then'—for Maggie had risen with such a look of rage and scorn upon her face, as bade him pause—'but will proceed to the proof at once.—I no more thought at first, as I have said, of anything more serious than a quarrel having happened between the two brothers, than you did, notwithstanding it was clear to me John had some good cause for concealing that Richard had returned to him that night; and even when the lost man did not turn up, I took the other's word for granted, that he had left the town, notwithstanding the private reasons I had for holding his departure to be unlikely. If, indeed, I had had any ground of suspicion of your husband, I should have worked upon it then, and much more, you may be sure, after I got this'—he moved a lock of dark hair aside, that hung over his forehead, and shewed a deep white scar. 'If I could have hung him *then*, by Heaven! I would have done it, without ransom! To see him swing, would have been dearer to me than a mountain of gold!' The vehemence and passion with which Blake pursued this topic, contrasting, as they did, with the calculating coldness he had hitherto displayed, were most remarkable, and shewed but too well that gain was not the only object, nor perhaps even the chief one, that he had in view. 'To think that for speaking lightly of a girl like you, a man should be so mauled as this'—here he snarled like the cur he was, and shewed a row of teeth with which art had supplied him, in lieu of those which John's hit from the shoulder had destroyed—'a girl, who, if she was not the thing I called her, was something worse, and cast one brother off for another as easily as one changes shoes. To think, too, that the man who struck me—that miracle of virtue, and soul of honour, as folks deemed him, so sainted, that he could not listen to a broad jest, but must needs arrogate to himself the right of chastising him who uttered it—to think that this man, I say, was a felon, a murderer, whom I could have sent to jail and to the gallows, with a word! If I could have laid him dead, I would have done it, even then; but now—knowing what I do—I feel, ay, as though I could tear his heart out with my hands! You, you too'—he broke out with a fresh access of fury, and pointing at her with a trembling finger—'do you think I will spare *you*, any more than *him*, now my time has come?'

'Is this the proof that you have to shew me of my husband's guilt?' inquired Maggie coldly. 'At present, I only see the evidence of such malevolence and hate as would have sufficed to forge a proof.'

'It was not necessary to forge it, madam,' answered the other, with a bitter sneer, 'as I shall presently shew you. About that time—I am

speaking of eighteen months ago—I had my own misfortunes’—

‘Let me describe them,’ interposed Maggie, in the same clear voice she had used at the beginning of their interview. ‘You lost what little self-respect you had, and took to cheating your acquaintances at cards; you were turned out of the club, and reduced to beggary; I have seen you in the street, myself, in rags.’

‘I am not in rags, however, now, madam,’ continued Blake, who seemed to have repented of his recent outbreak of passion, and to have recovered his self-control; ‘and thanks to the knowledge I possess, and am about to communicate to you, I am not likely to be in rags in future. Your delicate reference to my late condition is, of course, meant to suggest that my testimony is not unimpeachable. That might be so, if it rested upon my word alone; but it does not. I was foolish to fly in a passion, from the mere remembrance of the past, when so much can be remedied; you were still more foolish to taunt me with my humiliations. Let us proceed with the main business. I was poor; I was reduced to such sore straits that—I own to you frankly—I would have stuck at nothing. In my palmy times, I had often feasted in this very room, and eaten and drunk—especially drunk—of the best; and while casting about me in London for a livelihood, it struck me that something could be got at Rosebank, which would never be missed by its present owner, while it would have put me in funds. I allude to the wine in your husband’s cellar—he stopped a moment, as though to select his words, and then continued, in a harsh dry tone, as follows: ‘I had heard that John Milbank had bricked up that cellar on the very day that his brother left his roof—for what reason, I knew not, though I can guess it now; and hence, if I could only gain admission to the place, I might, it struck me, get all I wanted, without the risk of discovery. With this intention, I returned to Hilton some weeks ago. With the premises here, I was tolerably familiar; but before entering upon my project, I surveyed them with great particularity, taking care to select those times when your husband was at his office. Nothing would have been easier than to have removed the iron grating outside the cellar, but that would have been to have revealed the robbery—I am very plain-spoken, you see, madam, and call a spade a spade—and besides, it was my object to take all the contents of the place, which would have required several nights for their removal. On the whole, therefore, I judged it best to dig into the cellar from the toolhouse. The stock of wood for winter use was large, and would conceal my operations; the spade and pick were ready to my hands. My time was not valuable, and my gain was certain. It was altogether an excellent plan, and I worked it out to perfection. When I had nearly accomplished my purpose, however, and drew near the cellar wall, my difficulties increased, since, once under the house, every blow of my pick was liable to be heard by those above; and though I took every precaution, even to removing the bricks one by one, this did in fact happen, for your husband was disturbed, and discovered me in the very act. You will ask then, madam, how it was that, having no particular liking for your humble servant, he should, under

such circumstances, have held his hand—that had once been so quick to avenge your fancied wrongs, or forborne to give me over to the tender mercies of the police. The reason of this was, that before he discovered me in the cellar, I had happened to discover Something there myself. It was not very much—only some clothes and some bones—Permit me to pour you out a glass of water.’

If she had been told at any time during the last two years that, under any possible circumstances, she could have been persuaded to take even so much as a glass of water from the hand of Dennis Blake, Maggie would have indignantly denied it; yet she took it now, and almost felt grateful to him for that trifling service. Her vital powers and her reason seemed to be alike deserting her, and that at the very moment when she most required resolution and decision.

‘The shock is severe, no doubt,’ continued her companion grimly, when the colour began once more to faintly tinge her cheek; ‘I felt it to be so myself, I do assure you, when that spectacle first met my gaze. To come at midnight, and in the very bowels of the earth, as it were, upon the body of an old acquaintance, lying doubtless on the very spot where he had met his death—it was at the foot of the stone steps’—Maggie held up her hand imploringly, for had she not beheld that very spot herself, with its dark stain on the stone floor, that she was now persuaded had been Richard’s blood!

‘I have no desire to distress you, madam, more than is absolutely necessary,’ resumed Blake coldly. ‘So long as you understand the fact, the details may well be spared. I will not even mention the poor victim’s name, whose remains lie at this moment exactly as I have described, beneath this very room—under our very feet! The verification of my statement—or its disproof—is easy; but I will suppose that you accept it. There is no more choice for you, indeed, than there was for your husband himself when he found me yonder’—he pointed with his finger downward—‘in possession of his ghastly secret. I think there was a moment when he thought to kill me also, and thereby conceal the evidence of his first crime by a second; but I was armed; or perhaps he had already had enough of blood-shedding. “I know who this was, and by whose hand he came by his end,” said I. He made no effort to deny it, but stood speechless, overwhelmed with remorse and terror. I was frightened myself, I own, and eager enough to get to the upper air. “Go first,” said I (for I was not so foolish as to let him come behind me); and he obeyed me like a child. When we got to the toolhouse, I put the wood back over the hole with my own hands, for he seemed quite helpless, and gazed at me like one walking in his sleep. When I told him, however, by way of comfort, how fortunate it was that an old acquaintance like myself, who understood the relations between him and his brother, and could make allowance for great provocation, had discovered his secret, since it would remain quite safely in my hands—upon certain equitable conditions—he seemed to recover himself a little, and be inclined to listen to reason. On the other hand, it was foolish in him, and a mere waste of breath, to endeavour to explain to me that the whole affair had happened by accident. That might have been the case or not; if it was so, it was no doubt a matter for his private satisfaction;

but so far as I was concerned (as I pointed out to him), it could not make one half-pennyworth of difference in my pecuniary demands. Again, it was still more foolish in him—the man who had struck me down in the open street—to attempt to appeal to my compassion. I refer to it, however, for two reasons: first, because his stooping to such a humiliation will bring home to you more than any words of mine the fact that he lay—and lies—completely in my power; and secondly, as a guide for your own proceedings. You have heard of a heart of stone; but stone may be worn away, they say, by water-drops, and therefore, perhaps, by woman's tears. My heart is made of sterner stuff. Besides, I hate you both, and would not spare you a single turn of the rack—so long as it kept life in you.

'Monster! what is it you demand?' asked Maggie hoarsely.

'Money! A round sum down. So much paid quarterly—and to the very day. It will not beggar you; you will not go about in rags, as I have done; but you will be poor, and I shall be rich. Money!'

'I will not give you one farthing, though it were to save your soul.' She had risen from her chair, and stood confronting him with pale resolute face and unshrinking eye. 'Thief, by your own admission; coward, by your presence here; liar, by the story you have fabricated against my husband's honour, I will give you nothing—nothing! I defy you!'

'O ho, madam, so you guessed it from the first, did you,' answered he, 'and made up your mind to fight it out? Have you forgotten, then, what I told you a week ago, that I have in my possession—I have it here—the proof, the damning proof of what I have told you, in your husband's own handwriting? Do you suppose that I trusted to his bare word? No, no. Here it is, in black and white—his own admission.'

'Let me look at it.'

She had moved towards him, and he stepped back towards the curtained window, to avoid her. 'Gently, gently. Keep your distance, madam. I am not going to let your nimble fingers touch a document that is worth to me five thousand pounds at least.'

'It is worth nothing: I do not believe in its existence. It is just as likely as not to be blank paper, and all this wicked talk a scheme to extort money from a defenceless woman. Let me see it, I say.'

'You shall see it, but at safe distance,' replied Blake, still retiring before her.

'That means, it is a forgery,' answered Maggie boldly.

'Forgery or not, madam, it shall never leave my hand.'

Here the curtains opened behind the speaker, a strong arm stretched over his shoulder, and plucked the paper from his grasp; he turned round with the cry of a wild beast, and found himself face to face, not with John Milbank, as his fears foreboded, but with the inspector of police!

'I will shew the document to the lady myself,' said Mr Brain.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—CHECKMATED.

It would have been difficult for the most skilful of physiognomists to detect the chief among the various passions that convulsed the countenance

of Dennis Blake, on finding himself disarmed of the weapon wherewith he had proposed to win so much. For an instant, he glared savagely at the inspector, as though resolved, at all hazards, to regain the document of which he had been so unceremoniously dispossessed; but there was such an unmistakable look of power in the well-built frame of his opponent, as he stood with his hand behind him, and the paper in it, and such an obvious 'You had better not' in his resolute features, that he seemed to abandon that idea as hopeless. But the rage in his face remained no less vehement for being baffled; and mingled with it was a fear that blanched even his dusky cheek. Irresolution, too, had as evidently seized him, as he glanced from one to the other of his two companions, uncertain to which side to attach himself, labouring between the slender hope of yet securing his object, or the immediate gratification of revenge. The former consideration seemed at last to prevail with him, for, after a full minute of troubled thought, he thus broke silence:

'I hope, Mr Inspector, that you know the world too well, to have taken all that I have been saying to Mrs Milbank here, for granted. I confess, I was putting the screw on a little more tightly than the circumstances warranted, but that would have been explained all in good time. It is a case, I do assure you, which does not require your intervention at all. Though, I will answer for it, that you shall not have cause to regret your loss of time here. The little affair between myself and this lady may be very well settled out of court, but at the same time, you shall occupy the post of arbitrator—so far as the fee goes—and, it shall be a large one.'

Mr Brain did not reply, but turned an eye interrogatively towards Maggie, keeping the other, as it were, on guard upon his interlocutor.

'For my part,' answered Maggie resolutely, 'I wish to enter into no terms whatever with this man, whom I know to be a liar and a villain. I believe no word of what he has been telling me; but that he has founded his whole story upon some scandalous rumour, taking advantage of which, and of my unprotected and miserable condition, he has sought to extort money from me. That paper, I say again, if it be anything—if it be not a mere sham and pretence, with which to crown his infamous scheme—is but a forgery of my poor husband's handwriting, and will be proved so in any court of justice.'

'Have I, then, your permission to read it, madam?' inquired the inspector.

There was a melancholy gravity in his face that to Maggie's eye foreboded ill. There had been points in that long act of accusation to which they had both been listening, that had struck home with something of conviction even to her heart—though it did not waver even now in its allegiance to her husband; her own answers, specially framed though they had been to meet the ears of a third person, had not always, she was conscious, been such as to throw doubt upon Blake's story, and it might well be that the very man she had invoked for her protection was, in spite of himself, already committed to the other side. Still, all the more reason was there to put entire trust in that little weapon, the time for using which had now arrived; and to give proof of her confidence in John's innocence, by daring all.

'Read it, Mr Brain, by all means,' cried she, 'and read it aloud. Whatever it may say to my husband's prejudice, will be false, I know, as the knave who has brought it hither. I have nothing to fear from it, nor, thanks to your presence here, from him.'

'Are you mad, woman?—Stop, stop, sir!' broke in Blake, with vehemence, and stretching a hand out, in his excitement, that unintentionally struck against the inspector's chest. The next moment, he was staggering to the other end of the parlour, half-stunned by a buffet from that official's fist.

'Hands off!' exclaimed Mr Brain, in a warning voice. 'I have enough against you already, without your adding assault and battery to the list of your offences.—It is, as you say, madam, very well that we arranged this little plan together beforehand—that I am here to protect you from the violence of a scoundrel who would stick at nothing.'

In spite of this rebuff and denunciation, Dennis Blake once more lifted up his voice in earnest appeal to Maggie. 'I adjure you, madam, to forbid this man to read that paper, or you will repent it to your dying day.'

'Read it, Mr Brain,' repeated Maggie steadily, 'and aloud, if you will be so good.'

'That's easier said than done, ma'am,' cried the inspector, who had already unfolded the document. 'Why, this villain, this extortioner, has been trading upon absolutely *nothing*! Such a specimen of audacity, I have never beheld, in all my professional experience! Why, the paper is *blank*!'

'Blank!' echoed Maggie, in a tone of wonder, that needed all her self-command to counterfeit: her heart was as overpowered with gratitude as though a miracle had interfered in her husband's favour. The weapon, then, to which she had trusted had *not* failed her—the virtues of her father's darling invention had been proved indeed, in a manner, and with a result, that his wildest fancy could never have pictured. How little, too, could John have thought, when he flattered the old man's whim, and helped to make it a reality, that it should one day be the instrument of his own safety, and of his enemy's confusion!

'Blank!' repeated Blake, in a frenzy. 'Why, this is witchcraft, devilry! Blank! Why, I have read it every day since the night in which I forced his fingers to write it! Blank! Why, you have changed it yourself. You are in the same boat with this woman and her husband; she has bribed you. Give it me back, give it me back, I say!'

In the fury of his disappointment and despair, he cast himself upon the inspector like a tiger, and strove to drag him to the ground. Some years ago, it would have gone hard with the man whom he had thus grappled; but his constitution, which had seemed proof against drink and riot, had, as sometimes happens, without declension, utterly given way, so that he was but the shell and framework of the man he had been. In two minutes from the commencement of the struggle, it was virtually over; and presently there was a sharp click, and Dennis Blake was sitting breathless in a chair, with a pair of handcuffs round his trembling wrists.

'If you was as strong as you are vicious,' remarked the inspector, taking out his handkerchief, and mopping his forehead, 'you would be a very

ugly customer indeed. I could have given you a tap with my truncheon, mind you; but that would have been to rob the gallows of its rights.'

'She has bribed you,' gasped Blake hoarsely. 'Ah, with the money that she should have given you, I suppose,' chuckled Mr Brain, regarding his prisoner with much complacency. 'You are—you really *are* a specimen, in the way of scoundrels: quite perfection, upon my life.'

'I tell you, this is false imprisonment, and you shall pay for it,' continued the other, choked as much with rage as want of breath. 'It is on that woman's wrists—as accessory after the fact to a murder; I have said so, and I can prove it—and not on mine, that you should put these things.' He held up the manacles as he spoke, and shook them at her in impotent malice.—'Do you think your husband will escape my vengeance, through this device, you jilt, you trickster?—'

'Gently, gently,' broke in the inspector sternly. 'No hard words to any lady in my presence, or I'll gag you!'

'I say that John Milbank has committed murder,' continued Blake excitedly—'the murder of his own brother Richard, and that that woman knows it. I accuse her of being his confederate, and I charge you, inspector, to do your duty, without fear or favour, and arrest her as such!'

'I should think you were a sort of gentleman whose sense of duty is most uncommon powerful!' observed Mr Brain, leaning his head aside, and scratching it in the excess of his moral approbation. 'I don't wonder that the notion of another person's neglect of it should fill your breast with virtuous indignation; not at all. The *very* finest specimen, upon my honour, of impudence; no imitation, but the genuine scoundrel, with the true ring about him: brass, from skin to skin.'

'I don't care what you say of me—I don't care what you do to me,' gasped the wretched man, 'only take the charge. I say it's murder, and I can prove it. You're a policeman, and you have no choice but to obey the law.'

'I am a policeman, as you say, Mr Dennis Blake,' observed Mr Brain coolly, 'though, since I am an inspector, it would have been more civil to give me my title; and, as a policeman, I will just tell you how this case strikes me. I have heard your story with my own ears; and some of it I believe, especially that part of it where you acknowledged that you had broken into this house with felonious intentions. I happened to have discovered that underground passage, which, it seems, was your own handiwork, myself, and have, by means of it, explored the cellar. There are no "dead men" there, unless it's an empty bottle or two, which are sometimes called so, nor, in my opinion, have there ever been such.'

'It has been taken away, then, and buried elsewhere,' put in the other doggedly. 'I saw it lying by the stone steps, with my own eyes!'

'You have said that already, Dennis Blake; but when you said it last, you promised that there was the proof to follow. Do you call this white sheet of paper a proof of murder? It looks to me more like a proof of innocence!'

'It bore John Milbank's confession, the last time I looked at it,' cried the other vehemently. 'You have changed it for another. I say again, this woman has bribed you!'

'That statement is slander,' observed Mr Brain

quietly, 'and uttered in the presence of a witness. However, let me proceed with the matter in hand, which you will find to be still more serious. The tale you tell is a monstrous one, and has evidently been framed to fit the circumstances, which, again (at least the chief of them), are of your own making. By your own confession, you broke into the house in quite an unexampled manner. Having done so, and been caught, as you say, in the very act, and foreseeing punishment, although deferred, inevitable, you trump up this strange story. What motive induced Mr Milbank to spare you at the time, of course I cannot guess, but you have obviously taken advantage of that fact, to give the impression that he was afraid of you. The disappearance of his brother, and the malicious rumours prevalent in the town concerning it, have supplied you with materials for this plot, while his own unexplained absence from home suggested the time for the execution of it. You came here expecting to find Mrs Milbank alone, broken down by her heavy calamity, and a prey to nervous fears—a victim in all respects suitable for your infamous purpose. Instead of that, I am glad to say, you found a sensible and courageous woman, who had already placed her case in the proper hands. I arrest you, Dennis Blake, upon two charges: first, for the commission of the burglary, to which you have yourself confessed; and secondly, for an attempt to extort money, which I can speak to from the evidence of my own eyes and ears.'

LITTLE GREAT MEN.

It is a remarkable thing that some of the greatest men in history have been of small stature. Certainly, from all experience, height of person has no influence on the mental faculties. The chances seem to be that smallness of size, in fact, at times, a little lameness, is advantageous. The reason for this is tolerably plain. Tall and robust men are apt to devote themselves, or at least to derive so much enjoyment from boisterous pursuits, as to be rather indifferent to any specialty in mental culture. Men of small stature, and perhaps weak health, are, on the contrary, driven to mental occupation. Studying hard in their several vocations, they rise to distinction. A comforting reflection this for young men who have the misfortune to labour under personal infirmities. We propose to give a few notable examples of 'little great men.'

William of Malmesbury has preserved the tradition, that one of the greatest of our early English kings, Edgar the Pacific, was 'extremely small both in stature and in bulk.' William declared it to be an opinion amongst the English in his own day (that is, two centuries later than Edgar's reign), that 'no king either of his own or earlier times in England could be justly and fairly compared to Edgar.'

The next king of the English whose might can be at all compared with Edgar's was the Danish Cnut; his kingdom, indeed, had a far wider range. It is curious that this great warrior and legislator was also a singularly small man. William of Malmesbury reports that when Ed-

mund Ironside and Cnut were facing each other in arms at Gloucester, and everything was ready for battle, the Englishman asked the Dane to settle the contest by a single combat, and try their fortune without the destruction of so many faithful adherents. Cnut replied that his courage was great enough, but that he was apprehensive of trusting his diminutive person against so bulky an antagonist. He proposed that they should neither fight each other, nor let their armies come to blows, but divide the kingdom, Edmund taking Wessex, and Cnut taking Mercia. I have some suspicion that the monk of Malmesbury must himself have been rather dwarfish, for he is not only careful to take note of the smallness of size of great kings, but he has an admiration for every appearance of a mighty mind in a little body: he tells at length the story of a Norman knight named Balso, 'of small size, but incredible courage,' who, in a fight outside Pavia, in which more than a thousand men were engaged, was the only survivor on either side. This terrible little warrior 'hovered alone around the city, and by his single sword frightened the citizens as long as he thought proper.' William tells us that St Neot was so dwarfish that he had a step made of iron bars to stand upon while saying mass, in order to be able to reach the altar. It was kept at Glastonbury as a relic in his day. He has also been careful to notice that the mightiest of all the popes, Gregory VII. (Hildebrand), was quite a diminutive man. Another great king of England, who, like Cnut, was of a foreign, although a kindred race, William III., was of notoriously low stature. At the joint coronation of William and Mary, on Saturday, April 11, 1689, the short king and the tall queen walked side by side, not as sovereign and consort, but as joint sovereigns, with the sword between them; and the queer contrast between the figures of the imposing Stuart lady and the meagre little Dutch gentleman, did not escape the satirical observation of the vexed Jacobites.

Of the three great world-wide conquerors whom Napoleon classed together—himself, Alexander of Macedon, and Cæsar—he alone was a little man. His predecessors were both of them men of a truly majestic presence, tall of stature. Alexander, indeed, if his portraits are exact, was remarkable for his handsome and manly aspect. Bonaparte was always presented in the English caricatures of him, both pictorial and verbal, as a kind of pigmy. When the vulgar English crowded to his levees as First Consul at the Tuileries in 1802, after the peace of the preceding October, to the disgust of the high-minded Sir Samuel Romilly, they were probably disappointed at not finding him to be a dwarf. 'Bonaparte,' says Miss Berry, in her lively description of one of his receptions, 'by no means struck me as so little as I had heard him represented, and as indeed he appeared on horseback. His shoulders are broad, which gives his figure importance. Allusions to his stature were not always received by him with complaisance, but there is some humour in a correction which he once administered to one of his imperial grand chamberlains. The Emperor had made several fruitless attempts upon tiptoe to reach a book placed on a high shelf in his cabinet. The official hurrying eagerly to his assistance, said awkwardly: 'Pernit me, sire; I am greater than your Majesty' (*Je suis plus grand*).

que votre majesté). 'Please to say you are longer' (*Dites, donc, plus long*), said Napolcon, with a scornful smile.

An earlier victorious French soldier, whose name is invariably cited as the 'Great Condé,' was a little man; so was his admiring pupil, the Duke of Luxembourg, of whom William of Orange once angrily said: 'I can never beat that little hunchback!' 'How does he know I am a hunchback?' said Luxembourg, on hearing of the exclamation. 'I have often seen his back, but he has never yet seen mine.' The most celebrated of all our naval English heroes, Nelson, was none the less dear for his small size. The first of Russian warriors, the strange Suwarrow, was another of those leaders whose shortness of physical stature seems to be reflected in the short decisiveness of their actions, according to the proverb, 'Little and quick.' Suwarrow said that all his victorious tactics could be compressed into two words, 'Advance; strike.' He was famous, also, for the laconism of his despatches, like many earlier and later commanders of the first rank. Whenever he held a conversation, he studied to express himself with great conciseness. It seems to be a fact, however, that great generals of small size do not always prefer to be followed by small soldiers. Imposing stature has usually been in demand for the rank and file of fighting-men. Marius would not willingly enlist any soldiers that were not six feet high. Mr Carlyle has pictured with vivacity the tall Potsdam regiment of Frederick-William, 'the great drill-sergeant of the Prussian nation.' Aristotle says that the Ethiopians and Indians, in choosing their kings and leaders, had particular regard to the beauty and stature of their persons. Perhaps the Greeks, with whom physical perfection counted for so much, followed the philosopher's great pupil, Alexander, with the more satisfaction for the splendour of his person. In the chapter on Magnanimity and Little-mindedness in his *Ethics*, Aristotle lays it down as a principle, that beauty only exists with good stature; that we may call little persons pretty, but may not call them beautiful. Montaigne says that if a man of goodly stature marches at the head of a battalion, it creates respect in those that follow, and is a terror to the enemy; but it is plain, from the instances already cited, that the lively Perigordin was reasoning *a priori*. It appears, from a slightly querulous bit of self-portraiture in the essay on Presumption, in which he makes this remark, that the essayist himself was somewhat below the middle stature, and keenly felt the insufficiency; he says that his defective size 'carries with it a great deal of inconvenience, for that authority which a graceful presence and a majestic mien beget, is wanting.' It is not impossible that the sense of his bodily littleness was one cause of the eagerness with which he gave himself to study and criticism. Many of the greatest wits and humorists have been but insignificant creatures in appearance; for instance, Voltaire, Quevedo, and Scarron; the last called himself 'an abridgement of human miseries.' Le Sage, who was singularly handsome, and Swift, who was a tall and muscular man, are witnesses that the keenest wit is not confined to a small bodily lodging. Both Dryden and Pope were little men. Rochester nicknamed the former 'Poet Squab,' and Tom Brown always called him 'Little Bayes.' Pope

was only less deformed than Quevedo and Scarron, and was almost a dwarf; his consciousness of his mean appearance made him the more laborious in the cultivation of his talents, according to Shenstone. He was more sensitive and petulant than the first poet of the children, Dr Watts, who was also afflicted, like Pope, with littleness of body, and with lifelong sickness. It is related that when the hymn-writer was one day sitting in a coffee-house, he heard a gentleman say in a low tone: 'That's the great Dr Watts;' while another exclaimed: 'What a little fellow!' Turning to the two speakers, he repeated, with good-humoured seriousness, one of his own verses: it has been called by some who have told the anecdote an impromptu:

Were I so tall to reach the pole,
Or mete the ocean with my span,
I must be measured by my soul:
The mind's the stature of the man.

All biographers who have taken little persons for their subjects, agree in drawing the same moral as Dr Watts. When Calvin arrived at Nerae, and was trying to find the great-hearted Lefèvre, every one of whom he made inquiries gave him the same sort of answer: 'Lefèvre is a little bit of man, but lively as gunpowder.' This Lefèvre was quick to perceive the destiny of the young inquirer, and was the first to prophesy his future importance in the history of religion amongst the French-speaking peoples.

MATTERS OF PRECEDENCE.

GENERALLY speaking, writes that somewhat old-fashioned observer of men and manners, the *Spectator*, there is infinitely more to do about place and precedence in a meeting of justices' wives, than in an assembly of duchesses. No one will dispute the truth of this remark. Duchesses are hardly likely to have their rank called in question; it is known to all with whom they are likely to associate, and they are exempt from the perplexities and confusion of a promiscuous drawing-room. 'I have known my friend Sir Roger de Coverley's dinner almost cold,' adds the *Spectator*, 'before the company could adjust the ceremonials of precedence, and be prevailed upon to sit down to table.'

In one of Swift's minor writings, a very pleasant expedient is proposed to the lovers of precedence, for the use of those, he says, who love place without a title to it either by law or heraldry; as some have a strange oiliness of spirit which carries them upwards, and mounts them to the top of all companies (company, adds Swift, being often like bottled liquors, where the light and windy parts hurry to the head, and fix in froth). There is, it seems, a secret way of taking place without sensible precedence, and, consequently, without offence, which this writer proceeds to publish, for the benefit of his countrymen, and the universal improvement of man and woman kind. To quote the witty dean's own words: 'I generally fix a sort of first meridian in my thoughts before I sit down, and instead of observing privately, as the way is,

whom in company I may sit above, in point of birth, age, fortune, I consider only the situation of the table by the points in the compass; and the nearer I can get to the east, I am so much the higher; and my good fortune is, to sit sometimes, or for the most part, due east, sometimes east-by-north, seldom with greater variation; and then I do myself honour, and am blessed with invisible precedency, mystical to others; and the joke is, that by this means I take place (for place is but fancy) of many that sit above me; and while most people in company look upon me as a modest man, I know myself to be a very assuming fellow; and do often look down with contempt on some at the upper end of the table. By this craft, I at once gratify my humour (which is pride), and preserve my character. And to this purpose, my way is, to carry a little pocket-compass in my left fob, and from that I take my measures imperceptibly, as from a watch, in the usual way of comparing time before dinner; or, if I chance to forget that, I consider the situation of the parish church, and this is my never-failing regulator.

The order of precedence, as it affects the daughters of peers, has something very strange about it. It may not, perhaps, be generally known, that unmarried daughters have always the same rank as their eldest brother during the lifetime of the father, and this independent of the particular title which by courtesy the brother may bear. A duke's eldest son, for instance, ranks as a marquis; consequently, all his sisters, unmarried, have the rank of marchioness, though he himself should be, nominally, but an earl or baron—for the title of marquis being less ancient than the latter, is not the second title of the oldest and highest dukes of the realm. The most curious circumstance is, that the daughters retain this rank if they marry commoners; thus, if a duke has five daughters, four of whom marry peers of the realm below the rank of marquis, and the fifth, and youngest, marry her father's footman, the latter would retain her rank as marchioness, and go before all her elder sisters, though every one of them were peeresses. From an old writer on this subject, we will state a case particularly illustrative of this point. If Lady Frances, the daughter of a duke, marries Lord Francis, the son of a duke, she may either call herself Lady Frances, and retain her rank of marchioness, or call herself Lady Francis, and take place below the viscountesses. But if she chooses to retain her original rank, and her noble husband should be called up to the House of Peers by the title of Baron So-and-so, his lordship would lose one step in the order of precedence, and her ladyship three, by their elevation to the peerage.

Descending somewhat lower in the social scale, we may set down here that it was chronicled in a periodical called *The Inspector*, which appeared about the middle of the last century, that a Lord Mayor's ball was thrown into great confusion by a controversy between a 'watch-spring maker's' wife and the wife of a 'watch-case joint-finisher,' as

to which had the right to precede the other. The Lord Mayor was quite incapable of deciding the matter; indeed, it would puzzle the Lord Chamberlain himself to unravel such a knotty point. Had such a case been referred to Frederick the Great, he would probably have settled it, as he is reported to have done, in the matter between the wife of the President of the Court of Justice and the wife of the President of the Chamber of Revenue at Cleves. The former lady insisted upon taking the *pas* of her rival in all places of public resort, until the patience of the latter was quite wearied out, and her pride mortified past all bearing. As a last resource, the wife of the President of the Revenue Chamber wrote to the king himself, desiring that His Majesty would be pleased graciously to interpose his authority, and declare once for all which ought to go first. Frederick was at no loss to satisfy the complainant. His verdict had certainly one great merit of justice—namely, speediness of decision; of the graciousness of it we say nothing. He immediately returned the following laconic answer: 'Let the greatest fool walk first.' It is but fair, however, to the memory of this polished monarch to add, that a similar judgment is said to have been arrived at, some two centuries earlier, by Charles V. of Spain, when he had a like point to adjust between two ladies of fashion at Brussels. It is surprising, says the chronicler of this latter version, how polite these two ladies were to each other ever after, and how scrupulous of taking the lead.

The ladies' indictment of Timothy Treatall, Gent. in Mr Bickerstaff's Court of Honour, for which we refer our readers to No. 262 of the *Tatler*, is much of a piece with the above stories. Mr Treatall's offence was in the great and inextricable confusion he had caused, by desiring a party of ladies to take their places at his supper-table according to their age and seniority.

From the records of Mr Bickerstaff's Court of Honour, another case may be cited, as suggesting a fair and ready means of settling and adjusting any disputed points of ancestry—no very uncommon subject of jealousy. Dathan, a peddling Jew, and T. R., a Welshman, are indicted for having raised a disturbance, by a fierce and angry dispute about the antiquity of their families, the Jew pretending to be son of Meshech, the son of Naboth, the son of Shalem, and so on to the end of the chapter; and the Welshman, John ap Rice, ap Shenkin, ap Shones, &c. The decree of the court was, that they should be both tossed in a blanket, in order to prove, by sensible demonstration, which could go highest, and, as the *Tatler* says, 'to adjust the superiority, as they could not agree on it between themselves.'

The following story, related of George Colman the Younger, is a very neat attempt to settle the question between age and precedence. George IV. when Prince of Wales, met Colman at a party composed of the first wits of the day, and gaily observed that there were two George the Youngers in company; 'but,' continued he, 'I should like to know which is George the youngest.' 'Oh!' replied Colman, 'I could never have had the

rudeness to come into the world before your Royal Highness.'

At the dinners the celebrated Dr Bentley was wont to give at Cambridge, while Master of Trinity College, a gentleman, whom he was often obliged in courtesy to invite, but who was far from being a favourite with the learned doctor, without regard to the rank or consequence of the other guests, invariably pushed himself up to the top of the table, to the right or left, that is, of the doctor himself. The latter was wearied and provoked at last by this presumption, and one day, when he saw that this guest had taken his usual seat, above the rest of the company, Dr Bentley gravely walked to the top of the table, and taking up his own chair, carried it to the bottom, thereby so entirely reversing matters, that he who had striven so earnestly to be first, became literally last.

In Campan's Memoirs of Marie Antoinette is a very extraordinary instance to be found of disputed precedence and etiquette. It was the custom at Paris, it seems, under the old régime, when the public were admitted gratis to the theatres, by order of the court, to assign the king's state-box to the charcoal-venders of the city, and the queen's box to the *poissardes*, or fishwomen attending the markets; and, on one occasion, says Madame Campan, their right to occupy those seats was demanded as a fixed point of etiquette, with as much pertinacity as could be observed by nobles, or even sovereign courts. 'Such grave questions of precedence well deserve to be particularised in memoirs of the times. Since the Revolution, neither the charcoal-venders nor the *poissardes* are distinguished in the gratis performances: all ranks are confounded together. It appears to us only just that every one should know his rights, and keep his place.'

All trades and professions have distinct place and precedence with regard to each other, could they only be properly ascertained. That one trade, at anyrate, had settled its own lawful position, would appear from the following extract from a copy of the *Manchester Guardian* of fifty years ago: 'The tailors of Preston have put forth the following notice: To the Public.—The tailors' fraternity of journeymen respectfully present the following notice to the public: that in consequence of the situation which they are to be placed in at the ensuing Guild—a situation which they consider derogative from the dignity of their sacredly instituted profession, they do not intend to favour the procession with their attendance, except they are permitted to take that situation which the high antiquity of their trade demands—a trade first taught by instinct, and matured in the earliest ages. They are prepared to prove their inalienable right to the first situation, from unquestionable authority; nor did they entertain the most distant idea that the high antiquity of their honourable profession would have been disputed. The only privilege they wish, the only right they require, is to be allowed to move in that situation which has always been assigned to them from the creation of the world to the present time (the last Guild excepted), and they are resolved never to be disgraced by tamely accepting of any other.'

Animals, too, have been supposed to be not insensible to the distinctions of rank and precedence. In an entertaining book (*The Diary of an Invalid*), published early in this century, we read of the

cows in Switzerland having bells of different sizes suspended from their necks, in proportion to their merit; 'and it is said,' adds the author, 'that these animals are so susceptible of feelings similar to our own, that, if the leading cow fall into disgrace, and be deprived of her honours, she exhibits all the mortification of wounded pride and angry jealousy at the promotion of her rival. And the question of precedence excites as much bitterness in the pastures of the Alps, as it can do in the drawing-room of the Tuileries or St James's.'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A paper is published in the *Monthly Notices* of the Royal Astronomical Society, in which the Earl of Rosse gives an account of a long series of observations of Jupiter, accompanied by coloured lithographs. In these the peculiar features of the Jovial planet are represented with a minuteness of detail surprising to any one accustomed to regard the belts as stripes of uniform colour. It is only by steady perseverance with the great reflecting telescope that Lord Rosse has achieved such remarkable results, for even on the best nights interruptions occur. 'Often for minutes together all the finer details of a brilliant object like Jupiter are mixed up in inextricable confusion, and it is only at more or less widely separated intervals that the confused image suddenly appears to freeze or crystallise into one of great sharpness.' To the assiduity with which these clear moments were taken advantage of, we are indebted for the twenty-one coloured views given with the paper.

Lord Rosse confirms the conclusions of those observers who, within the past two years, have remarked a great loss of colour in the equatorial belt of Jupiter. In 1870 that belt was so red that the colour of the whole planet was affected by it. Since then, it has undergone a change, and now resembles yellow ochre. We trust that Lord Rosse will continue the study of these interesting phenomena.

In the same periodical, Mr Langley of Allegheny Observatory, Pennsylvania, gives an account of his observations of the sun. He acknowledges the value of the spectroscope as an instrument for research, but says there is much in the sun which can be made out by the telescope only. He desires that more observers should betake themselves to the work, for 'the solar clouds are of interest to the terrestrial meteorologist.' It would be important to find out the resemblances and differences, as compared with the clouds of our earth, as a preliminary investigation; and advancing from this, it is possible that 'the foundations of a future science of solar meteorology' might be laid.

Mr Froude, F.R.S.—an eminent authority as regards the shape and behaviour of ships—finds that the best material of which to make models is paraffin. It costs less than wood, can be cast hollow and roughly, of the required form, can be remelted when a new model is wanted, and

there is no loss by shavings and cuttings, for these all go back to the melting-pot. Another advantage is, that paraffin is easily shaped and cut in any direction. The shaping can be done by machinery; consequently, models of ships may be made for purposes of experiment, and afterwards broken up and refashioned as often as is desired. From these particulars, it will be seen that paraffin can be used for models of other things as well as ships.

If a speech or discourse could be made to record itself, there would be economy of time and labour. Mr W. H. Barlow, F.R.S. has invented a little apparatus which shews that this is possible. A mouth-piece is fitted in one side of a small chamber; on the other side is a small delicate drum of goldbeaters' skin; a light steel spring rests on the drum, and is connected with a glass pen. On speaking or whispering into the mouth-piece, the drum is set in vibration, the spring moves in obedience thereto, and the pen records the ups and downs on a strip of paper moved by clockwork. These ups and downs vary with the spoken words, being most marked where consonants prevail; and thus, whatever is uttered by the speaker, is accurately recorded on a continuous strip of paper, and can be read off by any one acquainted with the signs. This is not the first time that an attempt has been made to record the sounds of the voice by mechanical contrivance, and it will not, as yet, supersede the shorthand writer; but uses may be found for Mr Barlow's instrument which its inventor never contemplated.

An Electrical Recorder invented by Messrs Whitehouse and Latimer Clark, is an instrument as likely to be useful as it is ingenious. Its applications are obviously manifold; but for the present it is to record the number of passengers in an omnibus or tramway car. The instrument is fixed in some convenient part of the vehicle; all the seats are in connection therewith, and every passenger by sitting down makes contact and records his presence. The record is a strip of paper on which four pens make a series of lines and marks. The first line counts the minutes spent on the journey; the second line marks the speed and the stoppages; the third line counts the number of inside passengers within each minute of the time line; and the fourth line does the same for the outside passengers. All this goes on, so to speak, of itself; the passengers are unconscious of it; the conductor cannot hinder it, and so at the end of each journey the inspector tears off the strip of paper, and finds thereon an exact account of the number of fares he ought to receive. From this it will be understood that the electrical recorder may help in the cause of morality; for where cheating is impossible, a habit of honesty may be cultivated.

Another invention is an electrical gas regulator, which, as its name indicates, can be used to regulate the flow of gas from the works where it is made into the mains. It can be applied at any point where control of the outflow is required.

—Another is an improved method for lighting and extinguishing gas-burners; it excites a galvanic electric current with sufficient heat to light any number of oil-lamps, or gas-jets, at the same moment, and at any distance.—Another is 'an improved apparatus for lighting lamps, candles, and similar purposes.'

The latest suggestion with regard to crossing the Channel, is, to excavate under the sea on each side a tunnel two miles long, and at the sea-ward extremity of each, to build a harbour capable of receiving very large vessels, and reached by steps, or a lift, from the tunnel. These vessels would cross from harbour to harbour with ease and rapidity, passengers would land in comfort, and arrive in each country with no other inconvenience than that of passing through two miles of tunnel on each side of the channel.

We mentioned in a recent *Month* the reading of Mr Scott Russell's paper on the great central dome of the Vienna Exhibition building, at a meeting of the Institute of British Architects. Since then, a learned discussion of the paper has taken place, in which reference was made to the enormous span of the roofs of railway stations, the Midland terminus in St Pancras being cited as a case in point. Mr Scott Russell recommended that, when next a large railway station may be wanted, it should be built circular with a domical roof. This plan of construction, he argues, has great advantages; and if greater length than width were required, then 'all that the builders have to do is, to put two circular roofs alongside one another, and the two will be much stronger than one oval roof equal to the area of the two.' Are the architects sufficiently bold and enterprising to carry out this novel suggestion?

At a recent meeting of the Society of Telegraph Engineers, the rapid decay of telegraph poles was talked about. No perfectly effectual method of checking the decay has yet been discovered; and there is a good opportunity for some very clever chemist to invent a way to keep wood sound for ever. Of European woods, red deal 'stands' the best; but there are two kinds of wood in the forests of South America, called urunday and curipay, which have by nature the requisite durability; for, building-timbers cut from those trees, and fixed in the ground, have been shewn to be quite hard and sound when dug up after two hundred years.

Mr J. R. Napier, F.R.S. of Glasgow, has published a pamphlet 'On the Economy of Fuel in Domestic Arrangements,' in which he shews how great is the waste of fuel in ordinary fireplaces, and how to prevent the waste. He shews, too, in a clear and forcible way that disease is occasioned and life shortened by the use of gas in dwelling-houses; and by means of diagrams, points out a way to get rid of the deleterious atmosphere. Complaints are often made that people catch cold by passing from a hot room to the cold air outside; but the reverse is the fact: the cold is caught by

going into the heated room, and breathing its poisoned atmosphere. It is possible, as Mr Napier's pamphlet sets forth, so to plan fireplaces and lights that the air shall be pure inside the house as well as outside; and the truth cannot be too often repeated, that without pure air healthy existence is impossible.

Mr Silber has succeeded in improving gas-burners as well as lamps, and his improvements may be seen in the College of Chemistry at Kensington, where four cubic feet of gas with the new burner give more light than five feet with the old burner. Another advantage is, that the air is not vitiated, as it is with the ordinary burners.

Borings for coal have for some months been carried on in North Staffordshire beyond the outer edge of the long known coal-basin, and with success; and it is now certain that good workable coal can be got in a wide tract of country in which, as hitherto supposed, no coal could be found.

Mr Loiseau of Philadelphia has invented a machine which, with the help of two men, will produce one hundred and fifty tons of artificial fuel in a day. The materials are ninety-five per cent. of coal-dust with five per cent. of clay, sprinkled during the mixing with milk of lime. The pasty mass is then moulded into egg-shaped lumps; these are dried on belts of wire-gauze, are dipped into a solution of resin and benzine, to render them damp-proof, and are ready for the market. In this way, it is hoped a means of utilising the prodigious heaps of coal-dust at the Pennsylvania mines has been discovered.

By some naturalists, certain kinds of insects are described as having a power of communicating with one another—ants, bees, and wasps, for example. Often has the statement been made, that if one bee discovers a store of honey, the fact is soon known to others. Sir John Lubbock has, by careful observation, tested these conclusions, and has laid the results before the Linnæan Society. He introduced a bee to a small store of honey laid up in a secret place, and watched for consequences, and repeated the experiment many times with other bees, but with negative results only. He next tried with one of Marriott's observatory hives, but very few of the bees discovered the honey for themselves; and Sir John concludes, that 'even if bees and wasps have the power of informing one another when they discover a store of good food, at any rate they do not habitually do so.' From other experiments, he is led to doubt the proposition that bees are attacked if they enter a strange hive. Then with regard to the antennæ, which some entomologists look upon as hearing organs, Sir John has tried in many ways, and with different sounds, but has failed to discover the slightest sign of hearing in bees. But he has discovered evidence which seems to shew 'that bees have the power of distinguishing colour.'

The increasing use of electricity in medical practice is worth notice. Toothache can now be cured by a current of electricity ingeniously applied to the seat of the pain. The instrument employed is delicate, and specially contrived for the purpose. Chilblains also are speedily cured, if treated by electricity.

Recent experiments have demonstrated that amputation of soft parts of the body can be effected by an india-rubber ligature worn tightly round the

part to be removed. The pain is but slight, and in eight or nine days the diseased portion is cut away by the mere pressure of the ligature.

A case is recorded in a New York medical journal of the destruction of one hemisphere of the brain without disturbance of the vital functions of the patient. This has a bearing on Dr Ferrier's experiments, recently noticed in these pages. Those experiments are to be continued and extended; and it is anticipated that they will lead to an important result—namely, to shew that operations on the brain are possible. Deaths occur from tumours in the brain. If a hole were bored in the skull, and the tumour extracted, the patient might live. It is an operation that succeeds with sheep; for in some northern counties, it has long been the practice to bore a hole in the skull of a sheep suffering from 'staggers,' to extract the hydatids which occasion the malady, and so effect a cure. The value of Dr Ferrier's experiments will be largely increased if he succeeds in demonstrating that pain can be relieved, or life saved, by an operation on the brain.

The year 1873 has often been spoken of as wet and disagreeable; but meteorologists give it a different character, and it appears from rain-gauge observations laid before the Philosophical Society of Manchester, that the rainfall of 1873 was about twelve per cent. below the average. The summer months were very showery; and, as people naturally expect fine weather in the summer, their disappointment may have led to the impression that the whole year was wet. The preceding year (1872) was the wet year, at least in Lancashire, for the rainfall was thirty-six per cent. above the average. Popular feeling thus appears to be as much at fault with regard to the weather, as it not unfrequently is on social topics. Taking the observations of a series of years, we find confirmation of the statement, that in England we have more fine nights than fine days, for it is shewn that the day rainfall is greater than the night rainfall.

ODDS AND ENDS.

FROM DR. ROBERT CHAMBERS'S SCRAP-BOOK.

STORY OF A FOUNDLING.—(Feb. 9, 1845.) Miss Edmondstone, a lady of ninety, relates a curious story of a foundling. About eighty years ago, Mr Gordon of Ardoch, in Aberdeenshire—a tall castle situated upon a rock overlooking the sea—was one stormy night alarmed by the firing of a gun, apparently from a distressed vessel. Collecting his dependents, and furnishing himself with lights and ropes, he hurried down to the beach amidst the peltings of one of the severest storms he had any recollection of. On arriving there, he and his people could discern no ship; they saw no light; they heard no cry. But, searching about, they found an infant lying in a kind of floating crib or cradle, as if it had been brought ashore from a perished vessel by the force of the winds and the waves. The young stranger was removed to the castle, and taken care of; and in the morning there were indubitable signs of a shipwreck on the beach, but no other person seemed to have got ashore.

Mr Gordon, unable to trace the history of the infant (it was a female), brought her up with his own daughters, and became as much attached to her as to any of his children. The foundling received, in all respects, the same treatment and the same education as the young ladies with whom she was associated, and in time she grew to woman's estate. About that time, a similar storm occurred. Mr Gordon hurried as usual to the shore; but this time was so happy as to receive a shipwrecked party, among whom was a gentleman passenger. After a comfortable night spent in the castle, this stranger was next morning surprised by the entrance of the young ladies, upon one of whom he fixed a gaze of the greatest interest.

'Is this your daughter too?' said he to his kind host. 'No,' said Mr Gordon; 'but she is as dear to me as if she were.' And then he related the story of the former storm, and of the discovery of the infant upon the beach. At the conclusion, the stranger said with much emotion that he had all reason to believe that the young lady was his own niece. He then stated the circumstances of a sister's return from India, corresponding to the time of the shipwreck; and explained how it might happen that Mr Gordon's inquiries for the parents of the child had failed. 'She is now,' he said, 'an orphan; but her father has left her the bulk of his fortune, to be bestowed upon her, if she should ever be found.'

All these things being fully substantiated by the stranger, it became necessary that the young lady should leave Ardoch, to put herself under the care of a new protector; but this was a bitter trial, and she could at last be reconciled to quit Ardoch only on the condition, that one of her friends, the daughters of Mr Gordon, should accompany her. This was consented to; and the whole party soon after left Scotland to proceed to Göttenburg, in Sweden, where her uncle carried on a large mercantile concern.

There is no further romance in the tale as far as the young lady was concerned; for fact does not always go as fiction would. But a curious circumstance resulted, nevertheless, from the shipwreck. Miss Gordon was wooed and won at Göttenburg by a young Scottish merchant named Erskine, a son of Erskine of Cambo in Fife—a youth of narrow fortunes, and seventeen persons between him and the title and estates of the Earl of Kelly. The seventeen died, and this young man became an earl. More than this, a sister of Miss Gordon was, through the same connection of circumstances, married to a younger brother of the former, who succeeded to this title. Thus, through the accident of the shipwreck, two daughters of an Aberdeenshire laird became Countesses of Kelly. Unfortunately, neither had any children; so that the title has reverted to the Earl of Mar, the representative of the family of which that of Kelly was a branch. [Since the preceding was written, the earldoms of Mar and

Kelly have been disjoined, in consequence of the Earl of Mar and Kelly having died without issue, 1866, when the earldom of Mar passed to heirs-general, and the earldom of Kelly to heirs-male.]

THE WILD BEE.

I COME at morn, when dewdrops bright
Aro twinkling on the grasses,
And woo the balmy breezes in flight
That o'er the heather passes.

I swarm with many lithesome wings,
That join me, through my ramble,
In seeking for the honeyed things
Of heath and hawthorn bramble.

And languidly amidst the sedge,
When noontide is most stilly,
I loil beside the water's edge,
And climb into the lily.

I fly throughout the clover crops
Before the evening closes,
Or swoon amid the amber drops
That swell the pink moss-roses.

At times I take a longer route,
In cooling autumn weather,
And gently murmur round about
The purple-tinted heather.

To Poesy I am a friend;
I go with Fancy linking,
And all my airy knowledge lend,
To aid him in his thinking.

Deem not these little eyes are dim
To every sense of duty;
We owe a certain debt to him
Who clad this earth in beauty.

And therefore I am never sad,
A burden homeward bringing,
But help to make the summer glad
In my own way of singing.

When idlers seek my honeyed wine,
In wantonness to drink it,
I sparkle from the columbine,
Like some forbidden trinket;

But never sting a friend—not one—
It is a sweet delusion,
That I may look at children run,
And smile at their confusion.

If I were man, with all his tact
And power of foreseeing,
I would not do a single act
To hurt a human being.

And thus my little life is fixed,
Till tranquilly it closes,
For wisely have I chosen 'twixt
The thorns and the roses.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.
Also sold by all Booksellers.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 545.

SATURDAY, JUNE 6, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

STORY OF ERSKINE.

THE story of Wedderburn, an Edinburgh boy, who, reared in the profundities of the Mint Close, came to be Lord Chancellor of England, is rivalled in romantic interest in the history of the Hon. Thomas Erskine, also an Edinburgh youth, with but a poor patrimony, who, by dint of talent, rose to the same high dignity. Erskine came a little later into the world than Wedderburn. He was born 10th January 1750, and must have been in his seventh year when Wedderburn enacted the extraordinary scene in the Court of Session already pictured, and, like a fury, bolted off to push his fortune in London. In the case of Erskine, there occurs no such explosion of temper; and his early history is every way more exemplary and pleasing.

Genteel as was the Mint Close as a place of residence at the middle of the last century, it was scarcely more so than certain parts of the High Street, where there were common stairs leading to as many as nine or ten stories, each occupied by a separate family—the gentility, of course, always diminishing as you ascended to the roof—Peers, Lords of Session, or perhaps Dowager Ladies of quality, residing in the lower floors, doctors of divinity or of medicine higher up, tradesmen in the garrets—a queer but not unhappy jumble of people living in mutual respect of each other, and making few complaints as to their scanty accommodation. In one of those tall buildings, pretty high in the stair, dwelt Henry-David, fifth Earl of Buchan. In point of etiquette, his lordship should have lived in the first or second floor above the shops; but narrow circumstances compelled him to be satisfied with one of the higher floors, which could be had for a comparatively moderate rent. It is not quite easy to understand how one in the position of an earl, with his countess and family, should have been able to live with any degree of comfort in a floor of only three or four small apartments, elevated a hundred feet above the ground, and wholly destitute of modern appliances. Yet, the thing was done. To give an appearance of roominess, a good deal was effected

by having beds to resemble a wardrobe or chest of drawers. As for the servant-girl, she slept under the kitchen dresser.

Such was the town residence of the Earl of Buchan. He had an old castle somewhere in the country, but it had fallen to ruin, and he possessed no means to put it in repair. His available revenue at this time was only two hundred pounds a year. Having married a daughter of Sir James Steuart, Bart. of Goodtrees, and brought on himself the obligations of a family, his lordship was fain to seek a dwelling in town, for the sake of cheap education for his children. In his efforts at an economical style of living, he was nobly seconded by his wife. The Countess of Buchan is spoken of as having been a woman of acute intellect, elevated taste, sincere piety, and strong common-sense. She had three sons, David, Henry, and Thomas, and a daughter, Isabella, all of whom she taught to read, and otherwise instructed. In time, the boys went to the High School, a seminary of learning well adapted for grounding in the classics. Here, Thomas made some progress. His daily fare, like that of his brothers, was what was usual among Scotch boys, even among the higher class of families—a basin of oatmeal porridge with milk for breakfast, and 'kail' or broth with a piece of bread for dinner. The earl could not afford to give meals of a costly nature. Friends dropped in to tea at six o'clock in the evening, and so far the junior members of the family had an opportunity of seeing some good society, and hearing intelligent conversation. The talk was often on religious and ecclesiastical topics; for the Erskines were related to persons who took a leading part in church polity. Small as were the outlays on these little tea-drinkings, they were felt to press rather heavily; and to lessen general expenses, the family removed to St Andrews, where rents were lower, education somewhat cheaper, and fewer friends to be entertained. Tom, as he was called, was here advanced in his learning, and became noted for his activity and powers of memory. At the dancing-school, he learnt to dance *Shantrons*, and to acquit himself creditably in a

minuet. The cost of the schooling was not great, but we can fancy that even at St Andrews, with all the scheming and economy of the earl and countess, they had a severe struggle to maintain a decent appearance, and make both ends meet.

Some people—perhaps a good many—with no more than two hundred pounds a year, would spend nearly the whole on personal indulgences, and care little about educating their children. In the present case, with honours to sustain, there was a far higher sense of duty. David, the eldest son and heir, styled Lord Cardross, was sent to Leyden to complete his education; Henry was educated for the Scottish bar; and Isabella, the daughter, needed to be brought forward in lady-like accomplishments. Tom came rather worst off. With such pulls on his slenderly filled purse, the earl could not see his way to bring up his youngest son to a learned profession. If the boy had been allowed his will, he would have preferred to go into the army; but there were no funds wherewith to purchase a commission; and, to make the best of things, he agreed to enter as a midshipman on board a man-of-war. An opening of this kind being procured on board the *Tartar*, a vessel under command of Sir David Lindsay, he was assigned to a life at sea. Equipped in a cocked-hat, a blue jacket, and fanciful small-sword, he embarked at Leith, March 1764, bidding farewell to his parents, and doubtful as to his future prospects. Sailing down the Firth of Forth, and seeing Arthur Seat melting away in the distance, all before him was dark and uncertain. The utmost he looked forward to was rising to the rank of a lieutenant. How little was he aware of his destiny! The next time he saw the towering heights of his native city, he had attained to social eminence as a peer of the realm!

Fortunately, there was an elasticity of spirit in Erskine which enabled him to bear up under a harsh routine of duty. Things were then coarsely conducted in ships of war, as is shewn by Smollett's inimitable descriptions in *Roderick Random*. Minutely attentive to every detail of the service, the young midshipman lost no opportunity of supplying the deficiencies of his education by reading and study; nor was he less careful in treasuring up every kind of professional knowledge that was available. His ship having gone to the West Indies, he there picked up information regarding the country and the state of the labouring population. On his return voyage, in acknowledgment of his steadiness and skill in seamanship, he was appointed acting-lieutenant, a circumstance which opened up the hope of rising in his profession. Great, accordingly, was his disappointment when the ship was paid off at Portsmouth, with no immediate prospect of his being again employed. He was now eighteen years of age; his father had just died, and the prospect was sufficiently blank. Returning to his first fancies, he determined to go, if possible, into the army. The small sum left to him by his father enabled

him to procure an ensign's commission in the Royal Scots, or First Regiment of Foot. This change of profession took place in 1768, after an experience of four years at sea.

Erskine was now a subaltern officer in a marching regiment, flitting about from town to town, parading in a scarlet uniform, killing time by reading at circulating libraries, dancing at balls, and enjoying the ordinary amount of flirtation. So went on two years; when a flirtation with one of the belles of a provincial town—a lady of respectable family, but no fortune—abruptly led to a marriage with her, 1770. This was in some sense an imprudent act, yet it really proved to be auspicious. It inspirited him to think more earnestly than he had done before, and evoked the highest qualities of his mind. Sent with his regiment to Minorca, he was allowed to take his wife along with him. He was absent for two years, during which he devoted every spare moment to mental improvement, and made himself familiar with the writings of Shakspeare, Milton, and other great English poets, some of which he learnt to repeat from memory. The early instruction in religious matters, inculcated by his mother, now became publicly serviceable. He was selected to act as chaplain to his regiment, which was essentially Scotch, and his sermons and extempore prayers, delivered with fervour, gave unqualified satisfaction. One would say, with such a well-balanced mind, and gifts of oratory, there need have been little apprehension as to the future.

Back to England in 1772, he figured for a season in society in London, was introduced to Dr Johnson, and, as Boswell tells us, had the honour of wrangling with that incomparable gossip and disputant. In 1773, he was promoted to be a lieutenant in his regiment, and again was kept on the move from town to town. This idling away of existence, as he felt it to be, was irksome and hopeless. He could not buy steps in the service. Was he to live and die a lieutenant? No; something better must be thought of. Meditating on the awkwardness of his position, he, one day, by way of a little recreation, entered a court-room in which the town assizes were held. This was in August 1774. He was dressed in his regimentals, and attracted the attention of the presiding judge, Lord Mansfield, who, on learning that he was a son of the late Earl of Buchan, invited him to sit on the bench beside him, and, further, took some pains to explain to him the nature of the case that was being tried. This was the turning-point in Erskine's fate. He suddenly grasped at the idea of studying for the law, and from what he saw and heard, felt assured that he could have little difficulty in excelling the barristers to whose pleadings he had just listened.

A new chapter now opens in the life of Erskine. He had tried two means of livelihood, and they had failed. A third was now to be attempted. The hazard was considerable. His brothers were uneasy at his resolution; but his mother, with a

consciousness of his abilities, had no fears as to the result.

There were several difficulties to be encountered. He would, in the first place, require to study three years for the degree of M.A. at Oxford or Cambridge; then he must be admitted as a law student at Lincoln's Inn. How was all this to be accomplished while he was still in the army, and where was the money to come from to pay his fees? These untoward obstructions were successfully overcome. He procured leave of absence for six months from his regiment; and, as regards the routine of study at the university, we believe he derived some privileges in virtue of his birth. He got through his terms at Cambridge, and at last he sold his commission for a sum which gave him a lift onward. It needed it all. He had a wife with an increasing family. They were stowed away in lodgings at Kentish Town, one of the north-west suburbs of London, and the whole, as well as himself, practised the most rigorous economy. Looking at the position in which he was placed, with absolutely no friends to aid in his advancement, we can scarcely picture anything more lonely or depressing. Erskine, however, had in him the right stuff, out of which great men are buoyed to the surface. All he needed was a lucky chance to bring himself into a blaze of notoriety.

In July 1778, he was called to the bar, and for some months he underwent certain private discipline as a pleader. In November, the lucky chance came, and it did so in a way so curious and unforeseen, as to deserve special notice. Being invited to spend the day with a friend, Mr Moore, he was on his way to do so, when, in leaping across a ditch at Spa Fields, he slipped his foot and sprained his ankle. In much pain, he was carried home, and the engagement at his friend's house was necessarily broken off. Towards the evening, he felt himself so much recovered, that he resolved to join a dinner-party, for which an invitation had been received in the course of the day. He went—the inducement to dine at home not being particularly great. It happened to be a large dinner-party. There was much lively conversation with sallies of wit, in which Erskine shone with his accustomed brilliance. He made a favourable impression on Captain Baillie, an old salt, whom he had never seen before. Baillie was full of his own story. It was a case of oppression. For having, in a printed statement, shewn up certain gross abuses in the administration of Greenwich Hospital, he had, through the influence of Lord Sandwich, the First Lord, been suspended by the Board of Admiralty, and a prosecution for libel now impended over him in the Court of King's Bench. Discovering that Erskine had been a sailor, and was now called to the bar, he, without saying a word on the subject, determined to have him for one of his counsel.

Next day, while sitting in a despondent mood, Erskine heard a smart knock at the door. An attorney's clerk enters, and puts in his hand a

paper along with a golden guinea. It was a retainer for the defendant in the case of the King *versus* Baillie. Any one can imagine his delight at the unexpected circumstance. The guinea, his first fee, was treasured as a family keepsake. At first, he was not aware that there were to be along with him four senior counsel, each of whom would speak before him; and a knowledge of the fact was rather discouraging. Still, he studied and mastered the case; his acquaintance with sea-affairs and seamen adding zest to his mode of treatment. Before the case came on, three of the seniors were for a compromise. Erskine resolutely stood out. He saw his game. At the debate in court, before Lord Mansfield, these seniors were dry and prosy. The fourth, Mr Hargrave, began to speak, but he was compelled to leave by indisposition. It was too late to do any more that day, and the case was adjourned, which was fortunate, for the court would next day listen unjaded to Erskine's line of argument.

On the day following, 24th November 1778, the great day of Erskine's triumph, the case was left to his guidance. He stepped forward modestly, and, in a pleasing tone of voice, stated that he appeared as junior counsel for the defence, and begged to be heard. He was unknown to every one, except, it might be, to Lord Mansfield, who, on a former occasion, had shown him some polite attention. Warming as he advanced in his argument, he, in a flood of forensic eloquence, in bitter but just terms, pointed out the infamy of Lord Sandwich's proceedings, and besought the court to do justice to the object of his oppression. Instead of deprivation of office, fine, and imprisonment, poor Baillie deserved the highest approbation. 'The man,' he said, 'deserves a palace instead of a prison, who prevents the palace built by the public bounty of his country from being converted into a dungeon, and who sacrifices his own security to the interests of humanity and virtue.' The force, the truth of his eloquent harangue, produced an impression almost unprecedented. The court, crowded with men of distinction, was mute with astonishment. The speech was without rant, or mouthing; or any indecorum. It was fervid, elegant, and convincing; for it came from the heart, and was free from any of the hackneyed arts of a practised barrister. As the best tribute to so much eloquence, the case against the defendant was discharged. Baillie came off victorious. Erskine's fortune was made. As he left the court, and walked down Westminster Hall, attorneys pressed around him with briefs and fees. In the morning he was poor and comparatively unknown. In the evening he was famed, and in the way of making several thousands a year. Some one asked him how he had the courage to speak with such boldness to Lord Mansfield. The answer he gave has been immortalised. He said: 'Because I thought my little children were plucking at my gown; and that I heard them saying: "Now, father, is the time to give us bread."'

After this, Erskine pursued a successful career at the bar, without, as was remarked, incurring either envy or detraction. His good temper and geniality of manner made him a universal favourite. In 1779, he was employed in defence of

Admiral Lord Keppel, who had been wrongfully accused of misconduct at the battle with the French fleet off Ushant. He was successful in getting a verdict of acquittal; and full of gratitude for his zeal and industry, Keppel presented him with a thousand pounds.

It is unnecessary to pursue the details of his forensic and political achievements—how he defended Lord George Gordon, Horne Tooke, and others, became member of parliament for Portsmouth, and rising in his profession, was appointed Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, and raised to the peerage as Baron Erskine of Restormel, 1806. Owing to a change of administration, he did not long retain the office of Chancellor. While a judge, he was liked for his suavity. It never has been said that he was eminent as a jurist. He was celebrated mainly for his brilliant oratorical qualities, the saliency of his wit, his manly courage in defending right against might, and his indefatigable industry. He was fond of fun and jocularities, and uttered innumerable bon-mots, though, in these respects, he was perhaps outshone by his brother, Hon. Henry Erskine, who distinguished himself as an advocate at the Scottish bar. Lord Erskine's wife, who had been his faithful and enduring companion in depressed circumstances, unfortunately did not live to see her husband Lord Chancellor. She died in 1805, before he reached this dignity. He mourned and long survived her, marrying a second time in his old age. His lordship died while on a visit to Scotland, in 1823, and was succeeded in his title by his eldest son. The only thing we have to add respecting Lord Erskine is, that his *Speeches* have been collected and published, and testify to his extraordinary genius.

W. C.

THE STORY OF A GAS.

It is nearly a century since the celebrated Dr Priestley, on exposing iron nails to the action of nitric oxide, discovered a gas whose properties, he admits, upset his most cherished ideas, being of such a nature that he would not have hesitated beforehand to pronounce them incompatible. What puzzled him was, that whilst the gas was almost instantly fatal to animals placed in it, yet it supported and even intensified the flame of a candle. To this anomalous gas he gave the name of 'dephlogisticated nitrous air;' which, however, gave place to that of 'nitrous oxide,' on the science of chemistry soon after being emancipated from the 'phlogiston' theory. But it is not with the name of its discoverer, but with that of another great chemist, that this remarkable gas will be for ever associated. The story of how the latter came to investigate its properties is worth recalling. At the end of last century there lived at Clifton a physician named Dr Beddoes, a man of great abilities, and of restless mental energy, which, however, was not seldom misdirected. He was all his life a man of hobbies, and one of them was, that disease could be cured by the inhalation of 'factitious airs,' that is, artificially generated gases. Most of the elementary and compound gases, it must be borne in mind, had been only recently discovered. Of their physical

and chemical properties, a good deal was already known, but their physiological, and consequently their therapeutical, qualities had been little investigated. To a man of active imaginative faculty like Beddoes, the possibilities of the application of these aerial fluids to the cure of disease opened up a boundless field of speculation. He gave up the chemical lectureship at Oxford, in order to devote himself to a course of research into the curative virtues of various gases. For this purpose, he took a house in Bristol; but when his landlord, and his neighbours in Hope Square, came to know of his object, they were not a little troubled in spirit, and for a time it seemed very doubtful whether he would be permitted a peaceful occupation of the premises. The fear was, that the house, or, possibly, the whole square, might some fine morning be propelled skywards by the irresistible force of his imprisoned 'airs,' or that the surrounding atmosphere might be poisoned by the fumes generated in their production. When these alarming anticipations had been allayed, the sanguine doctor set hard to work, and in a few years managed so thoroughly to imbue others with his own hopes and ideas, that in 1798 the British Medical Pneumatic Institution was established by public subscription. Its founder had the sagacity to recognise the great merit of some papers on Light and Heat, written by a young man of only nineteen years of age, living in one of the remotest parts of Cornwall. To him Beddoes at once offered the scientific superintendence of the new Institution, which included a laboratory for experiment, a hospital, and a lecturing theatre. Humphry Davy—for he it was—eagerly accepted an appointment so congenial to his tastes.

The young chemist forthwith began a series of experiments on the physiological effects of different gases, in the course of which he, more than once, all but killed himself, by resolutely inhaling some of the most deadly aerial fluids. One of the very first of the gases to which he turned his attention was Priestley's 'dephlogisticated nitrous air.' Shortly before, an American chemist, named Mitchell, had propounded a theory of contagion by which this gas was credited with a capacity of mischief-working perfectly appalling. It was stated to be the active principle in all contagion, and to be capable of producing the most terrible effects when respired in the minutest quantities, or even when applied to the skin. To investigate the qualities of so pestilent an 'air' required some little courage. Davy first satisfied himself by cautious attempts, frequently repeated, that the gas could be breathed, at least in small quantities, without any of the dire effects ascribed to it. It should here be mentioned that in Davy's experiments the gas was inhaled in a diluted form, as his arrangements did not provide for a complete exclusion of the air in the course of the experiment. Convinced that it was so far innocuous, he at last determined on inhaling continuously a tolerably large quantity of the gas. He found that the first

inspirations caused slight giddiness; this was succeeded by an uncommon sense of fullness in the head; then shortly after came a sensation analogous to gentle pressure on all the muscles, attended by a highly pleasurable thrilling, particularly in the chest and extremities. 'The objects around me,' he says, 'became dazzling, and my hearing more acute, and at last an irresistible propensity to action was indulged in. I recollect but indistinctly what followed; I know that my motions were various and violent.' These effects soon ceased on discontinuing the respiration.

This experiment shewed Davy that he had got to do with a gas of very extraordinary physiological properties, and it stimulated him to further investigation. He soon found that the feeling of exhilaration was diminished when too large a quantity was respired; and further, that the mental effects were by no means uniform, but depended to a considerable degree on the bodily and mental condition at the time of the experiment. Sometimes the feelings produced were those of intense intoxication, attended by but little pleasure; while at other times the respiration of the gas gave rise to sublime emotions, connected with highly vivid ideas. He noticed that the delight was always most intense when he inhaled the gas after excitement, whether from moral or physical causes. The most remarkable experiment which he made was one intended to test the effects of the long-continued inhalation of the gas in a form more diluted than ordinary. For this purpose he shut himself up in an air-tight chamber filled with the diluted gas. We have not space to quote the narrative of his impressions; but after remaining in the chamber an hour and a quarter, the desire for action became so painful that he came out, and immediately thereafter began anew to respire the gas from a silken bag. His feelings were now raised to a state which he evidently finds it difficult to portray in words: 'A thrilling extending from the chest to the extremities was almost immediately produced. I felt a sense of tangible extension highly pleasurable in every limb; my visible impressions were dazzling, and apparently magnified. By degrees, as the pleasurable sensations increased, I lost all connection with external things; trains of vivid visible images rapidly passed through my mind, and were connected with words in such a manner as to produce perceptions perfectly novel. I existed in a world of newly connected and newly modified ideas. I theorised; I imagined I made discoveries.' When awakened from this semi-delirious trance by the bag being withdrawn from his mouth, he says: 'Indignation and pride were the first feelings produced by the persons about me. My emotions were enthusiastic and sublime. As I recovered my former state of mind, I felt an inclination to communicate the discoveries I had made during the experiment. I endeavoured to recall the ideas; they were feeble and indistinct. One collection of terms, however, presented itself; and with the most intense belief and prophetic manner, I exclaimed: "Nothing exists but thoughts! The universe is composed of impressions, ideas, pleasures, and pains!" Here, then, to all appearance, was the discovery of a panacea for human ills, such as had never entered into the imagination of poet to conceive. De Quincey says, that when he first experienced the pleasures of opium-eating, he felt that he had made the discovery that happiness

was a thing which could be bottled in a small phial and carried in the waistcoat pocket. But here was not happiness merely, but ecstasy—not, indeed, in quite so compact and portable a form, but easily generated in any quantity by the simple process of decomposing nitrate of ammonia by heat! In establishing his Institution, Dr Beddoes had in view only to cure and alleviate, by means of his 'airs,' the diseases of the body. Might he not now, with this

Sweet oblivious antidote,
Cleanses the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?

Davy's discovery, of course, soon got wind, and the British Medical Pneumatic Institution found itself famous. It was now visited by many literary and scientific men, curious to experience the effects of the wonder-working gas. Southey, Coleridge, Lovell Edgeworth, and Dr Roget, were among the number of those experimented on. Its effects were found to vary very much in different constitutions. Some were obviously much more susceptible to its influence than others, but all in more or less degree bore testimony to its exhilarating qualities, and its power to produce new and delightful sensations.

But the question still remained to be tested, whether an agent whose effects on the constitution were so singularly manifested, possessed any useful qualities to sanction its administration in cases of disease. Did this entrancing 'air' resemble in its influence the serviceable Scotch brownie, or only one of those fantastic sprites whose pranks are of little or no earthly use to any one? Experience soon appeared to shew that 'laughing-gas,' by which name it was now popularly known (though it may be remarked its action on some persons is to cause hysterical weeping), was of little use except as a kind of physiological curiosity. Dr Beddoes tried its therapeutic virtues in various ailments, but with little effect, except, indeed, that in one case a few whiffs of it nearly liberated a patient from all her mortal ills. One or two psychologists, also, curious to establish its precise effects on the mental faculties, and possibly hopeful, through the exaltation of the intellectual powers produced by it, to solve some great psychological problem, subjected themselves to its influence, but, as the result of Davy's last-mentioned experiment might have indicated, with no effect. Oliver Wendell Holmes tells us, half-laughingly, half-gravely, that on one occasion he inhaled a pretty full dose of ether—a substance whose physiological effects closely resemble in many points those of nitrous oxide—with the determination to put on record, at the earliest moment of regaining consciousness, the thought he should find uppermost in his mind. He relates that, when under the influence of the ether, 'the veil of eternity was lifted, the one great truth which underlies all human experience, and is the key to all the mysteries that philosophy has sought in vain to solve, flashed upon me in a sudden revelation. Henceforth, all was clear; a few words had uplifted my intelligence to the level of the knowledge of the cherubim. As my natural condition returned, I remembered my resolution, and staggering to my desk, I wrote, in ill-shaped straggling characters, the all-embracing truth still glimmering in my consciousness. The words were these (children will smile, the wise will ponder): *A strong smell of turpentine prevails throughout.*'

After the time of Davy, laughing-gas was almost thrown aside by men of science, as it did not appear capable of subserving any useful function. It now fell into somewhat disreputable company. Electro-biologists, peripatetic lecturing mesmerists, and others of the like stamp, pretended publicly to exhibit its physiological properties. But it eventually shewed itself possessed of qualities which fitted it for better society. Davy himself, with the prescience of genius, suggested an application of it which may be said to be the first practical hint towards the use of our modern anæsthetics. 'As nitrous oxide,' he says, 'seems capable of destroying physical pain, it may probably be used with advantage during surgical operations.' It was more than sixty years after this suggestion had been made, before the gas began to be used as an anæsthetic. It was in America that nitrous oxide (as well as chloroform) was first employed to produce insensibility; and from that country it was introduced into England as a tried and useful anæsthetic, in 1868. When used for this purpose, the gas is inhaled, not in the diluted form in which Davy used it, but entirely free from all admixture of atmospheric air. It is now the anæsthetic commonly used by dentists. For the purpose of the operating surgeon, it is not well adapted, as the period of insensibility from one administration lasts only about a minute, or a minute and a half at furthest. But, for the purpose of the dentist, this period is usually sufficient; and one of the commonest of dental operations may now be submitted to with perfect freedom from pain. The rapidity with which insensibility is produced, the absence of any unpleasant odour or troublesome after-effects, and its comparative safety, all eminently fit it for the purpose to which it is now commonly applied. The chief disadvantage in its employment, up to this time, has been the costliness of the apparatus for making and administering it; but this is now in some measure obviated, as the gas may be procured in small compass in a liquid form, and liberated for use as required.

The most recent experimental application of nitrous oxide in this country involves a return to the idea of the old Bristol physician. Dr Beddoes, we have seen, applied it to diseased bodies; but, obvious as the idea appears, it does not seem to have occurred to him that its peculiar action rather indicated its applicability to mental maladies. An agent capable of stimulating the mental powers, and producing exalted emotions, would, of all others, appear suited to that class of the mentally alienated who remain continually plunged in the depths of melancholy. The gas in its dilute form has lately been tried in this class of mental diseases; but the published accounts do not permit us to say that the results are very encouraging. For the time, it is true, it wonderfully stimulates the dormant mental powers, and enables the sufferer to recall with vividness the events of the past. Even in cases in which the power of coherent speech appeared to have been lost for ever, the inhalation of the gas has enabled the patients to relate, in a collected manner, long passages of their past lives. For the moment, it often gives a new direction to the thoughts, changing in a marked manner the current of the ideas. But the effects are only transient; and it is possible that were we acquainted with the mode of action of the gas, this tentative application of it might turn out to be a

mistake. But in regard to this question of its physiological action—what changes it undergoes and effects within the body—there is hardly anything yet known.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—MR BLAKE'S SUBMISSION.

A MORE disconcerted expression of countenance than was worn by Mr Dennis Blake, as he sat listening to the inspector's words, with bent-down head and with his wrists so much nearer to one another than custom or comfort would have dictated, it would have been hard to imagine. Such an extraordinary case of table-turning was never seen as had just occurred in the little parlour at Rosebank, and, what was still more remarkable, the operator himself, and not the spectators, was the person most astonished by the result. His dogged face, eloquent as it was of rage, and fear, and malice, wore a look of wonder and bewilderment that preponderated over all.

'I should like to speak a word with Mrs Milbank in private,' ejaculated he sullenly, when Mr Brain had finished his psororation, and laid his hand upon Blake's shoulder, in sign that he had taken possession of him as his lawful prize.

'I have not a doubt of it,' observed the inspector coolly; 'but I shall not permit you to do anything of the kind; for, if you are going to try the game on again of which I suspect you, it is my duty to shield this lady from your designs; while, if there is really any truth in your late statements, it is still more my duty that nothing should occur in the way of composition of a felony. That is a third charge, by the bye—supposing this cock-and-bull story of yours to have any ground at all—that will be urged against you in the proper place. You were ready enough to keep everything dark, remember, upon what you were pleased to call "equitable conditions." Altogether, Mr Dennis Blake, it seems to me that you are in a pretty considerable hole.'

The extreme depth of this hole, however, could only be appreciated by the person in it; this arguments of the inspector were incontestable; but besides, there was this supreme and bitterest conviction in Blake's breast, that the foe whom he had designed to ruin, and whose destruction he would gladly now have worked, no matter at what cost to himself, was probably at that moment beyond the reach of his malice. There seemed nothing for him but, by an abject submission, to save, if possible, his own skin.

'You can't compound a felony, Mr Inspector, if there was none to compound, you know,' muttered he sullenly: 'it was all gammon from beginning to end.'

'Oh, you admit that, do you?' answered the other contemptuously. 'Well, that will save the lawyers some trouble, at all events. But you'll find it more difficult to prove your breaking into the cellar was "all gammon" too.'

'I didn't take anything.'

'That's not the question, my man, though it is doubtless something that may be urged in mitigation of your crimes, and in the proper place: you might just as well say you didn't get anything by your attempt to extort money out of this poor lady; it was not through any fault of yours that you failed, as I can witness.'

'With respect to that matter, Mr Brain,' observed Maggie gravely, 'I have myself no wish to proceed against this person. I confess that his vile and slanderous story—though not for one single instant did it obtain credence with me—has given me great distress and pain; but to punish him would be to punish myself also. I can imagine that so base a creature, finding his case hopeless, and having nothing to gain by an honest confession, would gratify his malignity and spite by repeating in a court of justice, and to as many ears as possible, the same atrocious falsehoods respecting my poor husband which you have just now heard him utter.'

'They would give him another year or two for that, however,' remarked the inspector parenthetically.

'Still, that would be little satisfaction to me, as compared with its cost. I speak quite plainly, and in this villain's presence, because, under no possible circumstance, will I hold converse with him again, and that he may understand, once for all, my position in regard to him. Why my husband did not give him up to justice, in the first instance—'

'Ah, why, indeed?' sneered Blake.

'You had better be quiet, my man,' said Mr Brain menacingly. 'I know your past almost as well as you do yourself, and I foresee your future much more clearly. If once you leave this room as my prisoner, Dennis Blake, it will be for good and all. You may shoot your little spurt of venom, as this lady suggests, but that will be your only consolation till you die; for you will be "a lifer." I daresay I need not tell you what that means.'

Blake's dusky cheek turned a shade paler; but he answered nothing, only moistened his dry lips with his tongue.

'I say,' continued Maggie firmly, 'that it may be just possible that you may have possessed yourself of some secret connected with my husband's affairs, which has induced him to spare you, and the divulging of which may harm his credit. To save him that much of annoyance or inconvenience, I would willingly overlook your offences; just as, if your death would serve him ever so slightly, I would willingly see you hanged. Upon my own account, I have not one shadow of fear of you, nor one grain of pity.'

Mr Inspector Brain placed and replaced one of his huge hands softly over the other, as though playing on an invisible concertina; his head, too, moved in time to Maggie's words; altogether, he looked the very personification of harmonious but inaudible applause.

'So far as I am concerned, then, Dennis Blake,' continued she, 'you are free to leave this house, upon the proviso, that you never enter it again, nor attempt to address me either by word or letter, nor venture to soil my husband's name by breathing it through your perjured lips. Disobey me in this in the least particular, and the law shall take its course with you from that moment; and what that course will end in, you have just heard.'

'Silence, silence!' exclaimed the inspector warningly, perceiving Blake about to speak. 'This is the last chance of getting out of your hole, my man, that you will ever have, and I recommend you not to throw it away. This great piece of good-fortune is not only far beyond what you deserve, but I have my doubts whether it is not

defeating the ends of justice. A hair in the balance would just now decide me to take you by the collar, and lay you by the heels at the police office, which you would only exchange for the county jail, and that, again, for Her Majesty's establishment at Portland. So far as you are concerned, I will go a step farther than this lady, and say, that it would be an inexpressible comfort and satisfaction to me to see you there; so you had better keep a civil tongue in your head, or, since that is probably impossible, be silent. I say, I am not at all sure that I am not overstepping my duty in permitting such an audacious reprobate and villain as you have proved yourself to be, to escape punishment. This lady, it is true, by not appearing against you, might cause the charge of extorting money to fall to the ground; but not only have I heard with my own ears your voluntary confession of having committed a burglary under this roof, but I have seen the evidence of the fact with my own eyes. You talk—in his absence—of having some "hold" upon one whom all who know him know to be an honest gentleman; but that hold (whatever it may be) is as nothing, let me tell you, to the hold I have on you. I have got you as tight as any terrier who has his teeth in a rat's neck—and, by all that's dear to the heart of an inspector, I have a mind to shake you out of your skin! Still, taking into consideration the circumstances of the case, as respects this lady—and without the least regard to you whatever—and since she has formally declined to prosecute you, I will, for this time, let you go at large. Only, I also have one proviso to make: don't you stop at Hilton; don't remain within ten miles of the beat of Inspector Brain, because you will find the air unhealthy for you. It ain't often that these bracelets, which become your wrists so well, are unlocked so easily.—Not a word; not a syllable: now, go.'

Mr Dennis Blake was not a gentleman given to poetic metaphor, or he might have likened himself, on this occasion of his departure, to the month of March, which is said to come in like a lion, but to go out like a lamb. The air of proprietorship which he had assumed on his arrival, had utterly disappeared, and was replaced by one of extreme dejection. He shambled rather than walked out of the parlour, nor did he venture to breathe a syllable, even of thanks, to the inspector for seeing him out of doors. Nay, when he found himself alone, except for the snow-flakes, and journeying homeward to the wretched lodgings that he had, doubtless, calculated upon soon exchanging for more eligible apartments, he did but mutter to himself, in dismal monotone, the reiterated word 'Blank, blank!' in reference, doubtless, to the unexpected aspect of that document upon which he had built so much, and which Mr Brain had considerably returned to him on his departure; moreover, his countenance was that of one who, after he has promised to himself a magnificent prize in the lottery of Life, has drawn a blank.

CHAPTER XXXV.—NEWS AT LAST.

There have been battles gained before and since that, after which the conqueror exclaimed: 'One more such a victory, and I am undone.' And so it was with Maggie, as she sat that night in the parlour at Rosebank, when the ally who had so largely

contributed to her enemy's discomfiture had left her, to enjoy her triumph alone. Such another conflict, no matter how signal might be the success attending it, would, she felt, be utterly beyond her strength. Spiritless, prostrate, utterly exhausted with her own exertions—though she had but stood on her defence throughout—she was mistress of the field, and that was all. She had read how largely the element of chance enters into the calculations of war; how its greatest successes have been attained by a lucky stroke, and how vain would have been the foresight of the most skilful generals, even when the dove-tailing of this and that event with one another has come off beyond all anticipation, had not some mischance, which they have not reckoned on their side at all, befallen their foe: and thus she knew it had been with her in respect to Dennis Blake.

She had calculated on the virtues of the terminable ink to confound her husband's accuser, and on the presence of the inspector of police to inspire him with terror; and they had not failed her; but notwithstanding this good-fortune, all would have been fruitless but for the unexpected confession from Blake's own lips, by which he had been placed, independently of his offence against herself, within the power of the law. Throughout that terrible interview, trying enough had she been alone, but ten times more trying since she had had to weigh every word before she spoke it, with regard to its effect upon her hidden audience, as well as on the man with whom she was face to face, she had borne up to the last, though every nerve was strung to the utmost, and her very blood had stood stagnant more than once; but now that it was over, it seemed that the victory had been purchased at the cost of life itself. In her complete and utter prostration, she could hardly believe that she was the self-same being who had endured the experience of the last two hours, and never shewn—but once—a sign of that weakness which she had felt in every fibre, and the exhibition of which would have been ruin. The thought of her husband's peril had alone sustained her, and now the peril was past, her strength departed with it.

Yes, the peril was past, at all events for the present; but the Thing that had caused the peril—alas, no longer Nameless—had not passed; could never do so, as it seemed to her, but must remain before her eyes continually, a worse than Belshazzar's warning, since it was written in letters of blood. That much of Dennis Blake's narrative was true, she could have no doubt: no more doubt than Inspector Brain would have had, had it not been for that impotent and baseless finale, to which all had led, but which had never, of course, for an instant imposed upon herself. Without doubt, Blake had done the things he said he had done—indeed, they were sufficiently discreditable to be genuine—and it was even difficult for her to refuse credence to much that he had said of others. She perfectly well remembered—notwithstanding that she had so stoutly denied it—imitating at Richard Milbank's request, the autograph of her present husband. Richard had been praising her skill in caligraphy and other arts of penmanship, and had playfully asked her to give examples of it, which she had very readily done; and it was now brought home to her mind, that Richard had on that occasion pushed something before her with a

'Suppose that this were a cheque, for instance,' and that she had signed it in John's name. This might have been that bill for a thousand pounds. That she believed it indeed, was certain, since it seemed to reveal to her, with the suddenness of the rise of a stage-curtain, the real character and object of the wretched man on whom she had once thrown away her love. The representations of her father and her friends—of those who had known Richard best, and better far than she, an inexperienced girl, could possibly have known him—had gone for nothing, or even made her more kind to his faults, more blind to his vices and his selfishness; and through the years that had intervened, though she had got to have a more sober and reasonable estimate of human affairs, and with them, insensibly, of Richard's character, she had still regarded him with tender charity: he had been in her eyes, if not indeed 'more sinned against than sinning,' still 'no one's enemy but his own;' but now that delusion had found its end. A man might even forge his brother's name, and yet leave something to be urged in extenuation; but to make an innocent girl, whom he professed to love, the unconscious instrument of his crime, was the act of a villain. That Maggie herself had been the victim of the device, did not affect the matter, for if, on the one hand, she might have felt more indignation on another's account than on her own, on the other hand, the remembrance of how much she had loved this man, how passionately she had clung to him, how bitterly she had regretted him, filled up the scale, and made his trespass heavy indeed.

And as he sank, so rose, in Maggie's eyes, his brother, John. For years, nay, for all his life, save since she had been his wife, she had done him wrong, and all for Richard's sake. His very virtues, because they had contrasted so with the other's defects, had been obnoxious to her; and if she had not applauded those who sneered at them, she had not rebuked them. Of his love for her, she had been unconscious, but it almost seemed to her now that she must have been wilfully blind to it. What a life of placid happiness, had she perceived that love, acknowledged it, reciprocated it, in those early days, might have been hers! nay, might have been *his*—whose wholesome heart her conduct had changed to gall: not the gall of bitterness, for of that he was incapable, but of disappointment, of humiliation, of despair. What a present might he have been enjoying; what a past might he have had to look back upon; what a future might be awaiting him! But *Now!* Now she was sitting alone, a deserted wife, and John was a wanderer and an exile, she knew not where, nor why! She might know *Why*, indeed, if she pleased: she might learn how much was true, how much was false, of Blake's dark tale, by the mere unfolding of the paper that lay hidden in her bosom; but that was not to be opened till he was dead, or until she had lost her faith in him. And she had not lost faith. Lost? nay, she had gained faith. For if she had not believed ill of him, even in her blindness to his gifts of good, was it likely that she should do so, now that her eyes were opened to them, because this Dennis Blake accused him of ill-doing!

She did not, and she never would. Should John return to her to-morrow, or in ten years' time, or in twenty, it would be all the same. 'Here is your paper, still untouched, dear husband,' she would

say; 'nor do I wish to hear one word of what it tells, unless you wish to speak it.'

That resolve was firm within her, and to it she clung; but the days crept miserably by, nevertheless, and the desolate watchful nights lagged wearily indeed. There is one misery, and perhaps only one in the long category of human ills, to which the mind cannot shape itself, or get accustomed, namely, the torture of suspense. What we know, and can see the end of, though that end be desolation and blank death—the loss of all (for it seems all) we love—can, in the end, be borne. Time, though we so passionately deny its power to do so, does heal that wound; the cure is slow perhaps; it may take years, and every year to us a century; and now and again the wound, touched by some thoughtless hand, or touched by none—the revisiting a once-loved scene, a sound remembered, the scent of a living flower, or the sight of a dead one—any one of these may cause it to bleed afresh, as on the first day of loss; yet the cure is certain. But for Suspense there is no cure, no intermission, no relief. The sense of loss, however great and overwhelming, is occasionally forgotten; the mind escapes from it, and wanders free, or sinks exhausted with its burden into slumber. Occupation is more or less possible to us; the voice of genius can pierce through the mists of time, and absorb us for a little in its magic words; if music cannot charm us from our melancholy, it can soften it, for it is the fountain of tears: but Suspense has no such assuagements. Books cannot rivet its eye, nor music its ear. It resents such would-be alleviations, as the sick babe in pain resents its nurse's lullabies. They hinder it from its one function and employment, which is to watch; to listen; to anticipate the evil that is about to fall, it knows not whence, and fulfil the haunting presage of Ruin.

It is scarcely too much to say that her missing husband was never out of Maggie's thoughts, since the very dreams from which she woke to a new day of miserable expectancy, were filled with him. Whatever she beheld, reminded her of him—as, indeed, well it might, for she persisted in remaining at Rosebank, despite the persuasions of her friends. 'Suppose he was to return, to-night, to-morrow, and find me gone—even but to my father's house,' was her feverish fear, 'and thereby miss his solace!' Nay, even the very words that others spoke to her, though studiously shaped to avoid it, would recall him to her memory. 'You will get quite gray, my darling, moping here alone,' her father had smilingly said to her on one occasion, striving to win her from her loneliness; but she only shook her head, and straightway pictured to herself her missing dear one, whose brown locks had indeed turned gray, and in whose heart, consumed she knew not by what anguish, youth had died out for ever!

Thus six weeks or so of winter passed away—a winter so unusually severe that it froze the rapid river that ran by the town, yet could not numb her sense of loss, nor cool her fever of expectancy—and then came Christmas: the hallowed time of reconciliation and reunion; when home seems more like home than at other seasons, and wife and husband sit beside the hearth with a stronger sense than common of their unity. But it was not so with her. She listened, as did other wives, for her husband's footstep, but it was not, like

them, with gladsome expectation, nor even with expiring hope—for hope was dead; and it came, or seemed to come, a thousand times, to the cottage door, but never nearer, for it was but the wanton wind; and a thousand times his fingers tapped, or seemed to tap, at the closed panes, but it was but the pitiless snow and hail that mocked her; and a thousand times, at night, she heard, or seemed to hear, his breathing on the vacant pillow: and so she passed her Christmas. Her father came, bringing little Willie with him; but even in that there was no comfort yet: her eyes would rest upon the kind old man, who was so good to her, and who had loved her all his life, and never more (she knew) than now; but her thoughts were far away in aimless search of him she yearned for; or she would gaze upon the child at play, yet mark him not, or, if she marked him, lift her finger up for Silence. Silence for the step that never came.

At last the leaden-winged year drew to its close; and the morning of New Year's Eve broke in upon her loneliness in sheets of sleet and snow. She was sitting at her untasted breakfast, listening, as usual, to the stormful sounds without, when suddenly she heard the front door opened. Pale and trembling, she started to her feet, for the hour was too early for a visit from her father, and no one save himself and her husband was wont to enter the cottage without ringing. But the next moment she heard the stamping of feet and scraping of shoes, whereupon that little ray of hope, like all preceding rays, at once departed, and was quenched in darkness; for John would never have stopped in the lobby though snow environed him from head to heel, she knew, but would have come right on into her beloved presence. In this case, indeed, there was still more delay, for she heard Mrs Morden summoned, and their voices in hushed converse. The visitors, in fact, were her father and Mr Linch, and she had but to cast one look on their earnest faces as they entered the room, to know that they were the bearers of grave tidings.

'O father, you have news of John?' cried she.

'Yes, Maggie,' answered the old man, in broken tones; 'there is news; and alas, bad news.'

THE NAVAL PRISON AT LEWES.

A SHORT time ago we were permitted to visit the naval prison at Lewes; the county town of Sussex, which, we believe, is the only naval prison in the world. The building was originally the county jail of Sussex. It was bought by the government during the Crimean war, and served for a place of confinement for Russian prisoners; it was afterwards used as a barrack for marines; then as a convict hospital; and finally, in 1862, was handed over to the Admiralty, who instituted it as a naval prison for the incarceration of sailors and marines guilty of naval offences. This course of proceeding arose from a very correct desire to save our seamen from the contamination of prisoners in civil jails. It is a melancholy sight to see a soldier handcuffed and escorted into a common jail, for some military breach of discipline, and such a punishment is often the first step in a downward career. We have known a man go completely to the bad, after a very short sentence, who, till then, had always maintained a good character. The prevailing offence in the navy is absence without leave,

or overstaying leave. Insubordination is not a heavy percentage, but it may be considered an axiom that, whatever the offence, if searched to its origin, drunkenness will be found at the bottom of it. The naval prison will contain about one hundred and twenty men in solitary confinement; should there be more prisoners, the best behaved are 'associated,' and put together, but only then allowed to converse on ordinary subjects in the presence of a warder.

In going through the establishment, we are struck with the good order and dead silence that prevail, broken only by the monotonous voice of the warder conducting the shot-drill. There is an infirmary attached to the prison, but it is not in much requisition, and the deaths have only amounted to three cases during twelve years, out of over six thousand prisoners, which is about the number who have sojourned within the prison walls. This is an average of about five hundred a year. The number of tenants at one time depends very much on the presence or absence of the Channel Fleet and Flying Squadron. Either fleet returning home is sure to bring a cargo of delinquents for punishment. Every prisoner on admission is, according to the rules and regulations for naval prisons, strictly searched, in order that he may bring in nothing contraband; and whatever goods, whether money, pipes, tobacco, or anything he may have in his possession, are taken charge of and locked up in a depository for the purpose; and all such, together with his clothes, are entered regularly in a register, witnessed by the governor and a warder, and, on the man's discharge, are returned to him. Every prisoner is provided with prison clothing, which is more useful than ornamental, and marked with the distinguishing badge of the class into which he may be placed. He is also supplied with all other necessaries during his residence in the prison.

The prisoners are divided into three classes, and receive, according to their class, such small privileges as may be accorded thereto. All men on entry are placed in the third class, from which it rests with themselves to rise to the second or first. The first class is reserved for such prisoners as may appear to merit some relaxation of punishment, from their steady, orderly behaviour, and proper submission to the rules of the establishment. However, this knowledge of their characters can only be obtained from experience, and, in consequence, every prisoner must perforce remain a certain period in the third class. Of course, men so promoted to the higher classes require to maintain their character, or they will be again remitted to the third class as a punishment. The exceptions to the above rule are those cases where solitary confinement forms a portion of the sentence; but as solitary confinement is always broken by intervals of ordinary imprisonment, a prisoner may, on release from solitary confinement, be placed in the first class. Every prisoner has the rules, so far as he is concerned, read out to him, and a copy is placed in every room and cell. Reconvicted prisoners may be promoted only under special restrictions. Prisoners who enter with a record of previous convictions by court-martial are necessarily placed in the third class, and if convicted within six months of expiration of a former sentence, have to serve out three-fourths of their present sentence in the

third class, one-half if convicted within twelve months of their last sentence, and one-fourth if within eighteen months thereof. Over this latter period, the governor—with whom, subject to the above restrictions, rests the classification of prisoners—may promote any prisoner to the first class.

The prison is moreover supervised by a Board of visitors, consisting of the naval commander-in-chief at Portsmouth, his flag-captain, two of the chief magistrates of Lewes, the Speaker of the House of Commons, and one or two more. These have power to award punishment, and also to recommend a relaxation of punishment in the cases of deserving characters.

The first class of prisoners perform the same number of hours of labour, drill, and duties as do the second class, but the work is of a lighter and pleasanter description. Another advantage of being in the first class is, that although portions of the sentence may be solitary confinement, the usual Sunday dinners are nevertheless allowed. After six P.M. and during meals, all prisoners who may for good conduct be associated are permitted to converse among themselves, under the supervision of a warder. Second-class prisoners have their full turn of hard labour, as shewn in the foregoing detail of time. Like the others, they are under the strictest surveillance, and are not allowed to exchange one word with another prisoner. The rule of silence is also imposed on the warders, except for the necessary orders and directions they may have to give. After the day's work is done, this class is permitted to read or receive instruction till bedtime, but still in silence. Prisoners of the third class perform all the usual prison labour; but after six P.M. instead of relaxation, they are employed till eight P.M. in picking oakum and such light employment. Picking oakum, by the way, is, however, no small punishment, and, to unaccustomed hands, a very painful one.

All prisoners on admission have to sleep on bare boards, as a soldier does on guard, for one week, after which third-class men sleep as on guard every other night, and second-class men every third night; the prisoners of the first class, after completing the first week, have the regular prison bed and bedding. A luxury is allowed in very cold weather, if recommended by the surgeon—namely, a rug or blanket, or both. Prisoners shave daily, razors being served out for the purpose, and collected again by the warders. A part of the system which affects the smart-looking men most is the rule under which the hair of all prisoners is cut close to the head every fortnight. Prisoners of the first class may grow their hair for the last month of their sentence. All hands are served out with change of linen twice during the week. The amount of work done by the inmates of the naval prison amounts in value to about one thousand pounds per annum; and seeing that during the period of their incarceration, all pay, rations, and allowances are forfeited by the men, and credited to the Admiralty, it may be safely estimated that the extra cost of maintaining discipline, so far as this establishment is concerned, does not amount to much more than one thousand pounds annually.

On Sundays, necessary cleaning-up is all that is required. Prisoners rise at 6.30, and at 10.30 and 3 P.M. attend chapel (there is a chapel in the main

building), the families of officials and visitors being allowed in the gallery, from which they, however, can only see a series of close-cropped heads below. The men sing with considerable unction, and with remarkably good effect. There are found generally among seamen those who can sing, and the best are arranged in a choir, and are accompanied by a harmonium. The weekly silence has at least one effect that many a clergyman asks for in vain from his own congregation—the responses are given with an unexampled fervour, and the confession of sins, if not heartfelt, is at least loud in expression. Temporary seclusion from the world in this retreat has also the effect of interrupting epistolary correspondence with one's friends, for a prisoner with a sentence not exceeding three months is neither permitted to write home, receive letters, nor see visitors. Those in for a longer period may, after expiration of three months, if the governor approves, write one letter, receive one letter, and see one visitor per month, in presence of a warder. All letters sent and received are inspected by the governor. All prisoners in solitary confinement are allowed a seat in their cells, and every cell communicates with a gong in the corridor by means of a bell-handle in the cell. In order to know who has pulled the bell, both to attend to the prisoner's wants, and to secure against pulling it needlessly, the act of ringing turns a small ticket at right angles outwards; this has the number of the cell printed on it, and the prisoner cannot replace the same himself. The warder in the corridor can at once see who has rung. Of the eighteen warders, all are on duty every day, and three or four every night, so that it will be seen their place, irksome as it must otherwise be, is no sinecure in point of rest. The warder on night-duty has to patrol all the corridors. We were amused at seeing a specimen of his daily report—namely: 'I patrolled the corridors of the prison from o'clock A.M. till o'clock this morning, "pegging the tell-tale clock" every half-hour during that time.' As many of our readers may not know what 'pegging a tell-tale clock' is, we will explain it.

An ordinary clock-case contains clock-work which moves a dial-plate marked with the hours as usual from one to twelve: each hour is subdivided into four, thus shewing the quarters. This dial has no hands, but round the circumference are arranged forty-eight pegs, radiating outwards. Each peg moves in or out of a hole opposite each hour and quarter. The case is locked at night with all the pegs out; a handle from without being pulled, *exactly at any quarter*, causes a hammer to strike on the corresponding peg, and drives it in, where it remains till next day. Now, in order to be sure that the warder has done his duty, and kept awake, he is ordered to peg the tell-tale clock every hour, half-hour, or quarter, as may be determined. In order to do so, he must present himself at the clock-face exactly at the quarter, and pull the handle. Should he be a minute late, he may know what to expect, for, like time and tide, tell-tale clocks wait for no man, and dereliction of duty is necessarily visited with severe punishment in such an establishment. Every prisoner in solitary confinement is employed suitably, and receives moral and religious instruction, has suitable books given him to read, and is allowed as much open-air exercise as is good for his health. The fare is much the same as in other prisons; but we may

observe, that every man is weighed on entry and release, and that short-sentence prisoners are invariably lighter on exit, from unaccustomed food and labour, while long-sentence men increase in weight, from having got used to the work and the regularity of hours and diet.

The prison has been, since its establishment, entirely under the superintendence of its present governor, who is, of course, a naval officer of rank, and to whose judicious firmness, and method of carrying out the discipline prescribed, is due the fact, which is an important one, that very few men return a second time within its walls. Many doubtless keep steady from dislike of punishment, but very many also, who have entered indifferent characters, return to their ships thoroughly reformed. The royal navy and marine forces number sixty thousand men, and out of this number, as we have said, five hundred annually are committed to the naval prison.

THE OLD COPPER TOKENS.

PLENTY of books have first and last been written on coins issued by royal and competent authority, but little has ever been said regarding tokens, or pledges for small payments, resembling our present copper money. We shall endeavour to give some account of these tokens, which as lately as the reign of James I. were usually nothing else than bits of lead struck with a die. A project for a copper currency was attempted in Elizabeth's reign, but after pattern-pieces had been arranged for, the plan was abandoned. The corporation of Bristol were, however, authorised by the queen to issue and circulate a farthing token.

James I. in the eleventh year of his reign delegated his rights to coin copper money to Lord Harrington for a monetary consideration, the patent being, however, for farthings only. This patent was renewed by Charles I. on his accession to the throne; but the privilege was grossly abused by the patentees, as they issued the farthings in immense numbers of a merely nominal value, the coins weighing six grains only. They encouraged their circulation by selling twenty-one shillings-worth for one pound in silver; by this artifice, numbers of unprincipled persons were induced to buy them, and force them upon their customers at the rate of five, ten, and twenty shillings-worth at one time. The consequence was, that, in a short time, both in the metropolis and the adjacent counties, there was a great scarcity of gold and silver, their place being supplied by legions of those almost worthless pieces. This accumulation of patent farthings in the hands of the petty tradesmen caused the latter no small annoyance and loss, from the refusal of the unprincipled patentees to change them. The clamour became so great, that the outcry reached the ears of the House of Commons, and caused them to be suppressed in 1644 by a decision of that body; and the farthings were re-changed with money raised from the estates of the unprincipled patentees.

An authorised currency was intended to have been then struck, but owing to the Civil War, which

was then raging, the subject was driven out of people's heads, and the project fell to the ground. The execution of King Charles put an end to the exclusive prerogative of issuing money; a free trade in coining was the consequence, causing a general issue being made by tradesmen and tavern-keepers of those halfpence and farthings, both in copper and brass, which are best known as seventeenth-century tokens. These pieces being of more intrinsic worth, and of nearer approximation to their current value, than the almost universally detested patent farthings, speedily became popular. Another advantage which they had over the latter, was the facility with which they could be exchanged by the issuers for the coin they represented. They were thus tokens or pledges that the person whose name appeared on the coin would change them for the indicated value. For the convenience of changing tokens, tradesmen kept boxes divided into compartments, into which they placed the pieces until a sufficient quantity was collected, when they were returned to their issuers, to be exchanged for silver currency.

In London, the practice of changing the tokens became a trade, and some of the changers issued tokens themselves. As might be imagined, the shape and devices of the pieces varied according to the individual taste and fancy of the issuer; thus we have, besides the ordinary circular form, square, octagonal, diamond, and even heart-shaped coins. The size was generally the same for the farthings and halfpence—about that of our modern bronze farthings, but much thinner. Amongst the common devices were the arms of the Trade Companies of London, especially those of the Grocers', Mercers', and Drapers' guilds. On the town pieces issued by the authority of the corporation, the borough arms is generally found. It is noteworthy, that during the period between the death of Charles I. and the accession of his son, very few tokens bear the arms of the Commonwealth, although great numbers were issued; whilst, after the Restoration, the royal arms, the king's head, and other emblems of royalty, are common.

The spelling of the inscriptions on these coins of the people is most eccentric and irregular; this is partly due to the unsettled state of the English orthography at this period, and partly to the excessive ignorance of the token-makers. For instance: Wycombe (Bucks) is spelt in six ways—Wickham, Wikcombe, Wickiam, Wickcombe, Wicknm, and Wiccombe; Market-Harborough seven ways; and Peterborough no less than ten ways. One ingenious gentleman takes the trouble to spell the name Peeterbourough. The Blue Anchor at Dover figures as the Blew Anker, the Mermaid in Cheapside variously as the Mearemayd, Mearmad, Mairmead, and Maremade. We have preserved, by means of these pieces, the name of many a quaint old London tavern; amongst others, are the World's End, Mother Redcap, Devil and St Dunstan, Have-at-it, Three Nuns, Two Kings

and Still, Daniel and the Lions, Hercules' Pillars, The Labour in Vain, Dagger and Magpie, Five Inkhorns, Horns and Horseshoe, Crooked Billet, &c.

Almost every trade figures on the tokens, many of which are now obsolete, or are known by other names, as, Slaymaker, Throyster, Baysmaker, Capper, Starcher, &c.

There is a Newbury token which was issued by no less a personage than the rector himself, Joseph Sayer; the reverse has the appropriate device of an open Bible.

That this popular money was issued mainly for the convenience of the poor, is manifest by many of the mottoes on the tokens. On the town-piece of Oundle, we read: 'For the Use of the Poor;' on those of Limerick and Tamworth: 'Change and Charitie;' that of Andover: 'Remember the Poor;' and on that of Lichfield:

To supply the poores need
Is charity indeed.

Amongst other inscriptions, these are frequently found: 'For change, not fraud;' 'For the poores advantage;' 'I am for a publique good;' 'I am for better cheng.' One sentimental trader has on his token the device of two pigeons cooing, with the motto: 'Good-morrow, Valentine.' Many pieces have patriotic and loyal inscriptions, as: 'Fear God, and honour the King;' 'Long live the King;' 'Rather dead than disloyal.' An Irish token has: 'The diligent hand maketh rich;' and on another: 'Teperary will change them again.'

Tokens continued in circulation from about 1648 until the issue of royal copper money in 1672. It is probable that considerably over ten thousand varieties were in existence at this time. Boyne, the best authority on this subject, describes more than nine thousand in his work, of which number about three thousand belong to London and its suburbs alone.

As we have seen, this popular coinage originated with a great public necessity, but at last became almost a nuisance; nearly every tradesman issued tokens as a kind of advertisement, and being only payable at the house of the maker, these were very inconvenient.

The government of Charles II. had for some time intended the circulation of copper money, and as soon as it was ready for issue, which was not until 1672, the tokens were suppressed, by a very stringent proclamation, and their circulation ceased almost immediately. Boyne says: 'A few attempts were made to continue them; but the threat of government proceedings against the offenders, effectually put them down, and we hear no more of them.' In Ireland, so late as 1679, a few were issued. It is rather remarkable, that while great quantities of tokens were issued in England and Ireland, none are to be met with in Scotland; the patent farthings seem, therefore, to have fulfilled the requirements of the people. Tokens were needed no more by the public, after the issue of a royal coinage, until the latter part of the eighteenth century, when, owing to the scarcity of copper money, great numbers were

issued; but with this series, we have at present nothing to do, as they can scarcely be considered like the interesting old tokens we have discussed as the 'money of the poor.'

ADVENTURE OF A DIGGER IN COLORADO.

I AM a dweller in towns, and a lover of them. To me, meaningless are the rhapsodies of those who delight in the majestic solitude of nature, and the wild glorious freedom of the untrodden desert. Central Park, and that portion of New York lying within a mile of it, was always wild enough and varied enough for my taste; the Jersey City or Staten Island ferries were marine enough for me. As for the tales of adventure from the frontier, I only shuddered at them, and held the whole race of gold-miners, above all, in something like terror. Yet it was fated that I should become a gold-digger, by proxy at anyrate, and a most successful one too, and this is how it came to pass.

It is not so many years back since my wife's brother died in Colorado. He had always been a wild sort of fellow, fit only for a life among miners, yet we liked him much, for he had many good qualities. He was injured by the falling of some rock; and the nearest doctor—they had one not more than sixty miles away—said that although he might linger a good while, even months, perhaps, he must die from the accident. So Dick got a comrade, who was going eastward, to send me a telegram as soon as he got where telegraphs existed, detailing what had happened, and begging me to go to him. I need scarcely say how little this was to my taste, but we did not hesitate a moment; we liked poor Dick, and I thought it very probable that he was lying on a bed of pain without a friend, and without a dollar. My wife was naturally even more solicitous about him than myself.

The trip westward has been told too often to need any description from me: I journeyed through what seemed almost interminable space, and at last reached that gathering of (then) mean habitations, called Denver. (I was there again last year, and found it slightly changed.) The place where Dick lay was, I found, about a hundred miles from Denver; and I found also, that the best, if not the only way to get there, was on horseback; and now the real horrors of my journey began. I travelled by myself, or if, by chance, I had companions for a few miles, these were so rough, wild, and uncouth, that I was always heartily glad to be rid of them; and the same when the monotony of the mountain track was broken by descending teams, or parties of horsemen; their presence frightened me a great deal more than their absence, yet I cannot recall a single instance of even rudeness on their part; but I was scared generally.

I had, of course, taken care to ascertain, before starting on my lonely ride, that there was no fear of Indians, who had all, it seemed, temporarily left

the district; so one great cause of fear was removed. Briefly, then, I reached Inauguration Town, so called because of the day when the first tent was pitched there, and found it a miserable place. A dozen log-huts, five of them being saloons, and about forty tents, formed the 'city,' as it not unfrequently styled itself. In a wretched room at the back of the largest saloon, I found poor Dick, in a sad state. He was very glad to see me, but it was plain he was not long for this world; he knew this well enough, and talked of his death as calmly as though he had been speaking of some one else. On one point I was quite surprised—so far from needing any help in money-matters, he was really a rich man, and handed me deposit notes amounting to some thousands of dollars, and made over to me the gold and valuables which were lying to his credit at the 'Bank.' Everything was done in a most informal way; but a complete answer to all my doubts and queries was given, by saying, that such was 'Miners' Law;' and anyhow, I had the proceeds of the gold duly handed to me the day after Dick's death.

When the poor fellow was gone, I had nothing to detain me at Inauguration Town, and so left it, as I had approached it, on horseback. I could have had company, as the landlord of the saloon told me there was an 'outfit' starting for Denver on the next morning; and taking it for granted that I should embrace the opportunity, he introduced several of the 'boys' to me at once; but such a wild, desperate-looking set I never saw, and would not have travelled with for the world. Very greatly to my host's astonishment, I called for my horse, and rode off at mid-day, more nervous on the score of my possible companions than of any roadside enemies.

I got on very well that day, and slept at a house where I had stopped on my upward journey. The citizen who dwelt there seemed glad to see me, after the apathetic fashion of these western people, but seemed astonished too, I thought, and when I was going away, he, in his rude way, complimented me on my courage: he said I had more *grit* in me than any down-easter he had ever seen. 'In fact, boss, there's many a western man would be skeary at riding alone through this locality, now the Utes is back so thick, and so nasty as they are too; but,' he went on, 'you have the real grit, I can see.' I rode off, completely staggered by his speech; and I doubt if any man in the world was ever so utterly cowed by a compliment on his courage. I resolved to ride very slowly, and allow the wild 'outfit' from Inauguration to overtake me; but one can't control one's fate. I had not ridden half-a-dozen miles, before I saw winding up a hill, to the brow of which I had just climbed, at least a score of Indians. They were, luckily, at least a couple of miles from me, and so there was every opportunity for me to avoid them.

I did not like the idea of riding directly back, so determined to take advantage of a ravine which ran parallel to the road I was pursuing, and which later was little better than a ravine itself, especially as, from my elevated position, I thought I could see where it issued into the plain below. I hesitated no longer, but turned into the ravine,

and was glad to find traces of a road and of travellers there; so, judging one way was used about as much as the other, I jogged cheerfully on.

I saw no house at which to get my mid-day meal, but I did not mind that, as, from the rate at which I had been descending, I reckoned I should soon strike the plain. I dismounted by the side of a little spring, and with my flask, and some crackers and sardines, managed pretty well. I had just lighted my cigar, and was lying under the shelter of a solitary tree, when, suddenly, a mounted figure came over a little stony ridge just behind me. I started up, and he started back. A more suspicious-looking character it would be difficult to imagine. He was a tall man, wearing a felt or leathern hat, squeezed into no shape at all; his black hair had probably not been cut for a twelvemonth; he was clad in buckskin from neck to ankle; a buffalo robe covered his saddle, by the side of which hung an eighteen-shot repeating rifle; on each hip he carried a large revolver; and a straight knife in a leathern sheath hung in his belt. At the sight of me, he recoiled, as I have said, and half drew one of his revolvers; but seeing that I was alone, and quite in his power, he came slowly on, keeping, however, his eye on me all the while. I thought conciliation best, so said: 'Good-morning.'

'Good-evening,' he replied; as everybody out there would have replied, whatever the time of day.

'Will you have a drop of brandy?' I asked, by a sudden impulse. He grimly smiled assent, and drank, pronouncing it 'good;' then he said: 'Where's your hoss, stranger?'

I looked round, and, to my dismay, saw that my steed had vanished—'had vamoosed,' the stranger said; then continued: 'I thought I saw a hoss in the gully over there, and when I see you, I thought it might be yours. Here; come this way.'

I scrambled over the rugged slope after him; but the horse was nowhere in sight. The stranger pointed to where he had seen it, and then, by signs totally unintelligible to me, we tracked it for some half a mile, until we found it in a perfect maze of rocks and gullies. I thanked him very heartily, and made an offer of reward; but with the same apathy which had marked his conversation all through, he declined it, and bidding me 'good-day,' rode slowly off, first having conducted me back to the track.

I followed the road for a long time, until I began to grow uneasy at the time which elapsed before I struck the plain. I could no longer see the base of the hills, and although I believed I knew the exact direction I ought to follow, I at last began to conceive the possibility of my having lost my way. To get back to my original road before nightfall, was impracticable, and I pushed desperately on, until nothing but the highest peaks of the tremendous mountains behind me were tinged by the setting sun. In a very short time this died away, and the valleys and ravines below became more dense and gloomy every minute.

All this time I saw no living thing, save that twice a mountain wolf crossed my road a few score yards ahead of me. To make matters worse, I found that my horse was nearly exhausted, and could only limp painfully along the rough track. I was growing more out of heart with my situation than I ever was in my life, when, on turning an

angle, I found that I had come upon a large tract of level ground, and that, not a hundred yards ahead, stood a shanty, from which a light feebly gleamed. My jaded horse pricked up his ears and stumbled briskly along, and in another minute I was knocking at the rude door. It was thrown open by a gaunt-looking fellow, in an old blue army cloak, and who held, although he partially concealed it, a pistol in his right hand. The interior, as I could see, was of the most uninviting character—scarcely an article of furniture, and lighted by a lamp which, void of glass, flared on the window-ledge.

I told my case, and sullenly bidding me turn my horse into the corral by the side of the house, and then enter, he moved away. When I had secured my steed in the inclosure, and the door of the shanty swung to behind me, I was almost sorry I had not chosen to sleep with the wolves in the mountain gullies. My host was silent and sullen, shewing very plainly his intention not to talk; presently, however, he said: 'Guess you'll want supper. There's water in that pail; there's whisky in that bottle; there's beef in that locker. You can't have nothing else.'

I said, which was partly true, that I was too tired to eat, I certainly could not have eaten or drunk in his dirty hovel, or of such uninviting food, especially with so forbidding a ruffian for my companion.

'Then you'll want to go to sleep,' he said roughly, and kicked a bundle apart, disclosing a couple of buffalo robes, with two rude pillows. 'There you are. Go to bed, then.'

It was of no use betraying any fear, and he was evidently giving up his bed to me, so I lay down, and in a short time was dozing, when I was aroused by hearing the tread of a horse, and then the door opened. I half rose from my bed, and, to my surprise, saw enter the man whom I had met at mid-day on the mountain. He recognised me too, but said nothing distinct.

'Well, how is it, Joe?' said the other man, with a very serious, if not anxious look.

'Bad,' said my friend, or 'Joe'—'very bad. It's all correct.'

'And are they—are the boys?'—began the other.

'Yes,' said Joe, filling up the pause; 'they mean coming. They may come to-morrow—perhaps to-night. We shall have to vamoose.'

They conversed in undertones, as they sat on their rude stools by the low wood-fire, chewing or smoking, and occasionally drinking from a whisky-bottle; their discourse seemed very grave and disquieting, and from a word or two I caught, and from their glances, I fancied they were often referring to me. At last, in spite of myself, I fell asleep, and tired as I was, might have slumbered till morning, but a tremendous crash awoke me, and, rising, I saw that the door had been burst open, and that the shanty was filling with strangers all armed, while Joe and his comrade had drawn suddenly to my side of the room. On the instant, half-a-dozen men surrounded them, and took their firearms.

'Holla!' exclaimed one of the new-comers, as he caught sight of me, 'who is this? Are there three in the gang?'

All eyes being upon me, although I did not quite understand the situation, I explained briefly who I was; and the account seemed satisfactory.

'Now, Joe Blakey, and you, Phil Marll, I reckon you know why we have come?' said the man who seemed spokesman.

'Guess we do,' said Joe, in his usual apathetic tone.

'You expected a visit,' continued the man. 'We have heard all your bragging agin the Vigilantes'—

'Never said so,' interrupted Joe.

I was amazed at these words. Here was I in the presence of the promptest, most terrible tribunal of modern times, and I divined only too clearly their errand. The Vigilantes, or Vigilance Committee, as may be known, is a self-constituted body, which, in the remote parts of the United States, springs into spontaneous existence to remedy in a rough fashion the monstrous defects of the prevalently imperfect courts of justice. Acting without, and, in fact, in defiance of, law, these committees, though doing things roughly, help materially to make life endurable for well-disposed citizens. Without the sense of justice which these vigilant and self-constituted bodies exercise, the great western wildernesses, with their sparsely settled population, and feeble judicial administration, would not be tolerable.

I soon understood the purport of the visit, as addressed to my host. 'You've been a terror to this here neighbourhood,' continued the spokesman; 'you've stole horses and cattle for more than two years past, and tried to put it all on the Indians. You have murdered men; and this here traveller would never have seen daylight again, if we hadn't come in. You got the Jew from Santa Fé into your shanty, and robbed and killed him.'

'No, captain!' burst out Joe; 'I bar that. I don't deny the hosses, nor the cattle; and I may hev killed a man or two; so may hev Phil; but I never touched the Jew, nor killed a man in my own shanty; and this here traveller should have gone his way a safe man.' Then turning to me, he said: 'You don't believe I meant killing of you, stranger?'

'I do not!' I said very emphatically, for I meant it.

'Well, there's enough agin you without that,' said the spokesman; 'though we know you ain't so bad as Phil. You've been warned to go, time after time.'

'Not reglar warned, captain,' argued Joe; 'and now we are agoin.'

'No, you ain't, you bet,' said the captain with a meaning smile, which ran responsively through his band; 'no, you ain't. Your time has come; but you shall have a fair trial from the Vigilantes here assembled; and what their judgment is, you must abide by.'

In an instant, a sort of formality was given to the assembly, the captain and another being the centre of a semicircle, while opposite to them were the two prisoners, guarded by four men. I suppose there must have been seventeen or eighteen of the Vigilantes altogether. With a rapidity that almost stunned me, the trial began and concluded. The prisoners offered no particular defence, they seemed conscious of its inutility, and the 'evidence' against them was chiefly accusation—but it sufficed. When the captain asked the verdict, there was a unanimous reply of 'Guilty'; and he addressed the culprits thus: 'Say—Joe

Blakey and Phil Marll, you hev heard the evidence in this honourable Committee of Vigilantes, and the verdict of guilty. We therefore intend to string you up, and we mean to clear the country of all thieves, right away. You have ten minutes allowed you to leave any message you wish.'

The apathy of the two men was extraordinary: Phil only scowled savagely at the speaker; while Joe absolutely turned to his nearest guard, and asked him for a 'chew'; and the guard, pulling a cake of tobacco from his breast, handed it to Joe, who broke a piece off, and began masticating it with apparent relish. Just then, I caught his eye, and I thought it was fixed on me with such a hopeless yet appealing look, that I could hesitate no longer. With an energy which surprised myself, I broke out into an appeal for the lives of the condemned, explained how I had been received by them, and given the best they had, and how Joe had helped me to find my horse in the day. 'I will be security,' I concluded, 'that they leave the neighbourhood. I bear letters from good hosses in New York to several persons in this vicinity, some of whom may be known to you, and which will prove I can bear out my offer.' I drew my letters from my pocket, and read the addresses: 'Captain Hiram Danks; Major Julius Blümper; Sheriff Gollipy; Colonel Vanwoort; Captain Himpus'—

'That's me,' said a rough-looking man. 'Give it here.'

He wasn't much after my idea of a captain; but, as it could do no harm, I gave him the letter. He read it, and handed it to the captain, a leader of the band, who read it also.

'Yes; that's all squar enough,' said the latter; 'but the Vigilantes out here don't vally New Yorkers, and don't work according to New York laws.'

'Nor they don't want no New York money,' said a voice from the rear.

An assenting murmur endorsed this sentiment, and I felt things were looking very black for my hosts. They were evidently of the same opinion, for Joe smiled sadly and said: 'It ain't of no use, squire; we're just as much obliged, though. I wouldn't say no more, or you'll maybe get into trouble yourself.—If things is ready, I'm ready,' he continued, turning to the leader.

'Well, we shan't keep you a-waiting long, Joe Blakey,' responded the latter; 'I hear the young men a-coming back; they have been choosing a tree.'

With horror, I exclaimed; 'I never dreamt of such cold-blooded work as this!—Look here, captain; the only reason I don't offer money is, because I believe I should do more harm than good by it; but, if you hang these men, you will send me away with the feeling that I have their blood on my head, for they expected your visit, and I believe that, but for my presence, they would have made their escape to-night. If you won't listen to anything else, you might think of that.'

I was pleased to see that my words made some impression, for instead of answering me in his calm, cruel style, the captain turned to his gang, and a low but earnest discussion took place. At last he turned round, and, in a very stern voice, quite different to that in which he had previously spoken, said: 'Hear me, stranger! The Vigilantes are sorry for your position, and respect your feelin's; but this is their decision, and I warn

you that if you question it by a single word, you will ruin the man you most seek to help.—Joe Blakey, you are considered by this honourable court as the best of the two, but you are very bad for all that. Your life is spared on condition that you hev cleared out from here in six hours, and are not found within a hundred miles of here ever after. Of course we give you time to go the journey.—Phil Marll, we know yer are a murderer, and a treacherous one—you die! These is the sentence.—Boys! string up Phil Marll.—If you like to see justice done in these western parts, stranger, come ont with us; if not, good-bye.

I turned deathly sick, as the procession left the shanty, Joe and I being its only occupants. One man, however, turned back, and said: 'O squire! you must excuse my neglect; but I am Captain Himpus, and I live at Three Creek Farm, over yonder. My wife and the young ladies will be glad to see you; and if you will stop a month with us, we shall be all the more pleased. I will introduce you to all our best citizens, and I'll answer they will be happy to have you among them.'

I stammered out a few words, and he hurried off, to be present at the catastrophe. We saw no more of them; but, after a few minutes of almost agonising silence, we heard a band of horsemen ride past the cabin, and could even hear their voices and laughter. I looked almost timidly at Joe, who heaved a heavy sigh, and breaking silence for the first time since his reprieve, said: 'They've done with Phil: there was worse men in the room than him, when the Vigilantes was here; though I don't deny, squire, that we hev been hard wretches.' He paused, as if taking a mental retrospect of the wretched portion of his life, then, very suddenly changing his tone, said: 'Now, squire, I must go, and that right away. I know where they've hung Phil: I shall cut him down, and leave some money with old Padre Francisco to have him buried, and all that; but before I go I have something important to say to you.'

'Do you require?'—I began, putting my hand into my breast-pocket, for I thought he wished to borrow money; but he waved his hand and said: 'No; quite different. I have plenty of stamps, and if I hadn't got to clear out now, should soon be the richest man in these diggings. You saved my life, stranger, and hev'n't made no fuss about it; and I feel it. You came down from the mountains by this long gulch at the back, I suppose?' I assented. 'Thought so,' he continued. 'Well, stranger, about half a mile up that gulch, a smaller gulch turns off—you'll know it, because it's the first on the left you come to—that gulch contains the richest lead of gold in Colorado, and it's a fortin for a man in a single season. I can't touch it now, but I hev got the claim, and I hereby give you over that claim. Work it, and you're a millionaire.' I strove to thank him, and to offer him the proceeds, or half; but he silenced me, and said he didn't want to hear any more of the place. 'You stop in here, squire,' he said, 'while I go and do what I've got to do for Phil.'

So he went, and I sat alone in the shanty until dawn, when he returned, looking as cold and impassive as ever. He mounted his horse—the Vigilantes had left one for him, and my own, out of several—and rode away, and I never saw or heard of him again—unless Joe Baker, from Colorado, who was shot at a saloon in Nevada, was

my friend, as some of my mining acquaintances declared to be the case.

I had mining acquaintances, and I followed the counsel given me, and worked the gulch, which, by the bye, I proposed to call Annabella Laurentina Gulch, after my eldest daughter; but which the people about, and even the county surveyor, would call Ugly Barney Gulch. Why, or who Barney was, I had not the least idea. But as Blakey averred, it was the 'richest lead' in Colorado: I took many thousand dollars from it that summer, and then sold it to a Company for many thousand dollars more. It is exhausted now, but its original purchasers were enriched. No amount of gold, however, would tempt me to reside in a country where Vigilantes, with their Lynch law, are a permanent institution, and where I used, at twilight, to fancy I saw the phantom of the ill-favoured Phil Marll lurking among the shadows and holes at the foot of the ravines.

CHIMES.

O CIRCLE out again, sweet chimes,
Across the intervening space;
You touch in me the tenderest trace,
My memory of the earliest times.

On me you over exercise
A sorcery words can ne'er explain;
My tongue to tell it tries in vain,
Unspeakable in me it lies.

O mingled welcome and adieu;
O strangely tintured charm of bells;
The myetic that within me dwells
Is answering harp-string unto you.

You whisper out across the eky
A spell I never can define;
You make your wizard sweetness mine;
Touch out the tears that in me lie.

O pastoral dream of joy and bliss,
'Goodwill and Peace' to all mankind!
Evangel to the human mind,
To drying eyes, and lips that kiss!

The nameless music of the bells
Is mystic melody to me;
And dimly stirs my spirit's sea;
The speechless that within us dwells:

Emotions none can all impart—
And better so, more great and deep,
Wheroin the Infinite doth sleep,
The soul of every human heart.

O bells with your triumphant peal
Above the heads of mingled men;
Thy spirit world surpasses pen,
And teaches what it is, to feel.

To all conditions, every age
You waken truths that will not die,
Refreshing man's false memory,
And brightening life's tear-blotted page.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 546.

SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

WASTE MATERIALS.

Nor long since, at a meeting of a club in New York, a jelly was exhibited on the table, and alongside of it, an old well-worn leather boot. The spectacle of the boot was a mystery, until it was explained by one of the members, that from the fellow of the boot, the jelly had been made by a certain chemical process. Jellies for the table made out of old boots! What next? We do not hear that the jelly in question was much appreciated as an article of diet. Its manufacture, however, suggests the propriety of reserving old boots and shoes for one or other of the many purposes in which they may be employed, instead of absolutely throwing them away. Indeed, scraps of all sorts can be advantageously utilised; and now very much more so than ever. 'Waste materials' is a kind of misnomer, for there is almost nothing absolutely 'waste.'

What with chemistry and manufacturing ingenuity, there go on around us the most extraordinary transformations. 'Chemistry, like a prudent housewife,' says Dr Lyon Playfair in one of his Lectures, 'economises every scrap. The clippings of the travelling tinker are mixed with the parings of horses' hoofs from the smithy, the cast-off woollen garments of the poorest inhabitants of the sister isle, and soon afterwards, in the form of dyes of brightest blue, grace the dress of courtly dames. The main ingredient of the ink with which I now write, was possibly once part of the broken hoop of an old beer-barrel. The bones of dead animals yield the chief constituent of Lucifer-matches. The dregs of port-wine carefully rejected by the port-wine drinker in decanting his favourite beverage, are taken by him in the morning as Seidlitz powders. The offal of the streets, and the washings of coal-gas, reappear carefully preserved in the lady's smelling-bottle, or are used by her to flavour blanc-manges for her friends. This economy of art is only in imitation of what we observe in the chemistry of nature. Animals live and die; their dead bodies, passing into putridity, escape into the atmosphere, whence

plants again mould them into forms of organic life; and these plants, actually consisting of a past generation of ancestors, form our present food.'

The incident about the jelly and the old boot receives notice in the recently issued and interesting work of Mr P. L. Simmonds, *Waste Products and Undeveloped Substances*, to which we propose to draw popular attention. It is quite evident from daily experience, that there is an immense mass of materials thrown away as useless which might be easily saved and disposed of for general advantage. Paper, for example. What a prodigious waste of note-papers, envelopes, pamphlets, circulars, and so on! Basketfuls burnt or carried to the dust-bin. Mr Simmonds asks: 'What becomes of the envelopes of the three millions of letters passing daily through our post-offices? all of which are worth preserving, for they will fetch, from two to three shillings per cwt.' Rags, as a more marketable article, are better taken care of; yet, as we are informed, sixths-tenths are irrecoverably wasted. Marine stores, as they are called, are the well-known establishments at which waste materials are purchased, but much never reaches them. Some years ago, a committee of the London Ragged School set on foot a rag-collecting brigade of boys, with the help of a few trucks. The enterprise was attended with considerable success. Paper, rags, bones, fat, old carpets, metal, ropes, hats, were collected from householders who were glad to get rid of the refuse. In nine months, the boys gathered upwards of eighty-two tons of these materials, besides about fifty thousand bottles. One of the articles was a bag containing a million of used postage-stamps, which had been collected and stored up by some fanatic.

On old used leather, such as that of the boot, there have been various schemes of utilisation. By dissolving the leather by steam and certain acids, it is possible to produce printing-rollers for cotton fabrics; but it seems preferable to cut the leather into pieces, mix them with a cementing liquid, and then squeeze the whole into a mass of different thicknesses, according to the purpose required, such as material for making up the soles and heels of

boots and shoes. With a quantity of paste and the force of a steam-engine, shreds are made to assume the appearance of cakes of leather—technically, pancakes or pasted stock—which are largely used in the wholesale shoe-manufacture of Massachusetts. There is another method in that country of using up shavings and scraps of leather. 'These are ground to a powder, resembling coarse snuff, and this powder is then mixed with certain gums and other substances so thoroughly, that the whole mass becomes a kind of melted leather. In a short time this dries a little, and is rolled out to the desired thickness, perhaps one-twelfth of an inch: it is now quite solid, and is said to be entirely water-proof.' There are various processes patented for melting down leather waste, and producing large sheets of artificial leather, possessing water-proof qualities, but we have not space to go into any account of them.

Bones, new and old, wherever they can be picked up, are put to a variety of uses. The fresher kinds of shank-bones serve for making the handles of knives, forks, and tooth-brushes. From some, gelatine is extracted. When not serviceable for these purposes, they are crushed into powder for manure. Bone-dust is worth from five pounds to five pounds ten shillings per ton. Farmers buy it in large quantities for fertilising their fields. The importation of this convenient fertiliser from foreign countries is immense. Stories are told of battle-fields being plundered for the sake of the decaying bones of the soldiers who had fallen. Researches for the material of bone-dust are carried on upon a large scale in the ancient cemeteries and pyramids of Egypt. Long ago, when the people of that country mummified the bodies of their relations, and stowed them ceremoniously away in caverns, they were not aware that they were only preserving them for manure in a distant European island. A correspondent of the *Times*, writing from Alexandria, facetiously remarks: 'Fancy mutton fattened on ancient Egyptians! The other day, at Sakhara, I saw nine camels pacing down from the mummy pits to the bank of the river, laden with nets, in which were femora, tibia, and other bony bits of the human form, some two hundredweight in each net on each side of the camel. Among the pits there were people busily engaged in searching out, sifting, and sorting the bones which almost crust the ground. On inquiry, I learned that the cargoes with which the camels were laden would be sent down to Alexandria, and thence be shipped to English manure manufacturers. They make excellent manure, I am told, particularly for swedes and other turnips. The trade is brisk, and has been going on for years, and may go on for many more. It is a strange fate—to preserve one's skeleton for thousands of years in order that there may be fine Southdowns and Cheviots in a distant land! But Egypt is always a place of wonders.'

Nothing seems to be so thoroughly used up as old clothes. The buying and selling of cast-off apparel is a great business in London. Usually, the worn garments are freshened up by dye-stuffs, pressed, and otherwise doctored for the market. The process of dressing them is called clobbering, and this in itself is a business. The better class of old dress-coats, when nicely clobbered, have a respectable appearance. Clerks with poor salaries, waiters, small tradesmen, and curates with meagre

stipends, are among the purchasers. Coats and other woollen garments which have done good service, are exported to Ireland, and Holland, where you may see them in great quantities for sale at the fairs and markets. As regards the sale of second-hand ladies' dresses, the trade is everywhere on the increase. Silks, lace, shawls, frills, and all other sorts of frippery, are purchased by dealers, whose names are seen in advertisements, and are retailed by them on a very comprehensive scale. Servants are not said to be the buyers. The chief customers for the used, though, in many cases, elegant dresses, are ladies who aspire to a showy exterior. Second or third hand chignons, we doubt not, are eagerly pounced on.

It is amusing to know that liveries, scarlet military tunics, and various official garments, decorated with lace, find a ready sale on the west coast of Africa, to which shiploads are exported. There, these gaudy articles of apparel, and the gaudier the better, are purchased for purposes of barbaric splendour. Think of a negro chief seated complaisantly under his court umbrella, dressed in a cast-off tunic of the Life Guards, or in one of the livery coats of the Lord Mayor's attendants! Used scarlet regimentals are said to be largely exported to Russia, to be cut up as facings for civil officials, though this we can hardly credit. Silk velvet waistcoats, when even pretty well worn, find a market among German and Polish Jews, to be made into skull-caps; it being one of the points of Hebrew etiquette to have the head covered on ceremonious occasions, dinner-parties included. Old velvet waistcoats from England turned into caps for Jewish worshippers in that strangely antique synagogue on the banks of the Moldau!

However woollen garments may be disposed of time after time, they are at length no longer passable, and then comes a total revolution in their character; the buttons are taken off, the linings torn out, and what remains of the fabric is ground by machinery into 'devil's dust.' This is the first step in what may be called the resurrection in old clothes. When a coat will not so much as hang together to dress up a scarecrow, it will still make down into very good shoddy, as the devil's dust is politely named. The meaning of this is, that the garment is torn up by toothed wheels into a condition of loose fibres, which, on being properly sifted, are mixed with fresh wool, carded, spun, and woven into cloth. There is a triumph of art! The shoddy, or mungo, as it is sometimes called, after being fit for the dunghill, is incorporated with what appears exceedingly beautiful cloth, and is again proudly exhibited as Sunday clothes on the backs of thousands of wearers. The thing seems ridiculous, if not a bit of a cheat; but let us not be too hard on shoddy. There is not a sufficiency of fresh wool for all the world. And as woollen goods are in an ever-growing demand, what better can be suggested than that the elastic fibres of the old garments should be wrought up into an article agreeable to the eye, and productive of bodily comfort? All hail to the value and virtues of shoddy! He was a great man who thought out that marvellous invention.

After all, shoddy cannot be expected to stand more than a single bolting. Usually, when the garment which is half-shoddy has served its turn, it is thought to have fairly done its duty; the

time has come when it should be resolved into its original elements, and, by a chemical change, help on our social system. In plain English, the shoddified rags must sink into the condition of manure, for various vegetable products. In the south of France and north of Italy, old woollen rags are used as manure for olive-trees, for which purpose they are in popular request. In England they are appreciated as manure for hops; wherefore, we may say, that the ultimate destiny of our old coats and trousers is the imparting of a certain savoury bitter to the beer in general use. The substance of old clothes a property in an ordinary beverage?

Of all the things in the world which appear utterly worthless are soap-suds. Mr Simmonds takes a different view. He tells us that 'soap-suds as a stimulant of vegetable life cannot be too highly appreciated.' We cannot go into his arguments on the great value of soap-suds, and it is sufficient to say that, when poured out as a manure, they are of prodigious efficacy. The French, who are up to everything in the chemical line, have taken a proper view of the value of soap-suds. Whether from private dwellings in Paris, or from the barges of the *blanchisseuses*, the Seine must have a good deal of soap floating about it in a wasteful kind of way, to say nothing of the greasy pollution from dead dogs and cats. There was a fortune, if properly looked after. An enterprising firm, fortified by the authority of the prefect, determined to begin a system of skimming the Seine. You would imagine it was a nonsensical idea. Quite a mistake. By uniting the skimmings of the river with the offal from hospitals, the firm is able, by the aid of chemistry, steam, and cookery, to fatten three thousand pigs, and to produce annually five hundred thousand pounds of soap. Let England tough that if it can! Can any one mention a town in Great Britain where the most valuable products are not senselessly floated off down the gutters and sewers, never more to be of use to human beings? We know of none.

Talking of Paris, we come to rats. Cellars, drains, slaughter-houses, are densely inhabited by these vermin. They may be killed to any extent, but are never got rid of. It is stated that, in all France, there are upwards of two thousand millions of rats and other rodents—that is, animals who gnaw with their front teeth. The Paris rats take the lead in audacity, and, as a species of game, are hunted for their carcase, their skin, and their fur. During the recent siege of Paris, rats figured as a marketable commodity for the table, and they may do so again. As an encouragement to their increase in numbers, they are allowed to make nightly visits to the depôts for dead horses, the bones of which they strip to the required cleanness. The depôts are surrounded by walls, to which they gain access by holes bored all round, every hole being exactly the length of a rat's body, leaving the tail sticking out. Once in every three months there is a grand battue. As the assailants, with noise of tin pans and drums, rush into the inclosure, the rats rush into the holes, and the collector, making a tour of the premises, seizes rat after rat by his tail, and transfers him to his bag with amazing dexterity. We are informed that 'the privilege of gathering rats on the battue-days is farmed out by the authorities, and a profitable business it is. These rats, sleek and fat as they

necessarily are, fetch a high remunerative price—the fur, the skin, and the flesh meet with a ready sale.' Mr Simmonds inclines to think 'that a nice, plump young rat, fried or roasted, and served up with good gravy and other condiments, would make a very delicious dish.' It is only a strong old-fashioned prejudice which keeps people from trying the experiment!

We have not space to notice a fiftieth part of the projects for utilising what is usually considered waste, and often very repulsive. Of the vast multiplicity of animal, vegetable, and mineral substances utilisable, there is something to say for every one of them, with occasionally a plaintive remark on the strange manner in which they are neglected. If anything, our author rides his hobby a little too hard. We would, as a finish, instance his notions of butter. The demand for this article, viewed as a product of the dairy, is so great in the metropolis, that an 'artificial butter,' made out of fat, has come largely into use. 'Here we have an article of primary importance, which, if honestly dealt with, may become an immense blessing to mankind.' As we understand, the only thing wrong about artificial butter consists in palming it off under various disguises as real dairy butter. Let grocers be reasonable, tell the downright truth, and say that they sell 'clean wholesome Australian mutton fat,' there would be no ground for complaint. A pleasant way of viewing things, this. Let grocers tell the truth, by all means, and it may be better for them in the end. We fear, however, that the world is a good way behind in this particular, and that there is little chance of doing much business in the meanwhile, in professedly 'artificial butter.' Magistrates, under the operation of the Adulteration Act, might do something to put butter on the footing commercially for which Mr Simmonds very eagerly and humanely pleads. It would be interesting to know how much false butter is consumed annually in the metropolis.

W. C.

ACROSS THE SANDS.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

'It won't rain; and if it does, it will not hurt me, Aline, dear! Come; I have just time left to walk the three miles; and I must not let my pupils fancy that their music-mistress has forgotten them.'

The speaker was a girl of twenty-one, or possibly a year older, with bright dark eyes, hair of a glossy brown, and a rich complexion. She had a pleasant smile withal, though there was something thoughtful, and at times sad, in the expression of the handsome face. There she stood, before the little chimney-glass in the one sitting-room of a tiny cottage, adjusting her simple hat upon the well-shaped head, that became it so well, while on the table near her lay a dark rain-cloak. It was a lowering day in the late summer; the wind blew in quick, uncertain gusts, that streaked the dull, leaden surface of the sea, here and there, with snow-white belts of foam; and the clouds drifted heavily by, on their way inland. The air was oppressively warm; and the hum of the bees, as they stirred among the blossoms of the flowering creeper that hung across the open window, seemed louder and more sullen than usual, such was the stillness that prevailed.

'I never see you set off, dear, to your daily drudgery in that weary Stourchester,' said Aline impetuously, as she moved uneasily on the couch whereon she lay, propped with pillows, 'without reproaching myself that you must walk so far, and work so hard, and all for useless, tiresome me! I am a burden and a hindrance to you, dear Margaret, and nothing else, and it would be well if I were out of the world, in which I have been only a sorrow and a trouble to those that loved me.'

There was something pitiful in the contrast between the health and beauty of the elder sister, and the frail form and wan, wistful face of the younger, as she lay among her pillows. Aline's long fair hair, and the delicate transparency of her cheek, pale as marble, made up all her claims to good looks. She was barely eighteen; but her thin hands and face, and the attitude in which the slender form was stretched upon the sofa, told their own tale of spinal curvature, that had made her a helpless invalid from childhood, and of the bad health that commonly accompanies such physical affliction. Margaret came quietly round to the sofa, folded the wasted form tenderly in her arms, and kissed the pallid cheek as lovingly as if the sufferer had been a child indeed.

'Never a sorrow to me, darling,' she said; 'never a trouble to me. You little know, Aline, how often the remembrance of the dear patient face waiting at home for my return, has kept my courage and my spirit from giving way altogether. It is good, believe me, to have some one to care for in this world beside one's selfish self. And after all, we have much now for which to be thankful. We have found friends here, in this strange place; and I could have more pupils to instruct, if only I had the time to give more lessons. What I earn is enough to maintain us in comfort. These are not like the dark days, immediately after poor papa died, when we had to leave the dear old parsonage, and did not know where to look for a home. And now—'

'And now, you are all to me, Margaret—parents, and sister, and friend, for I never had a friend but you; and, indeed, how should I, a crippled thing with a winchancy temper at best, as our old Scotch nurse used to say; and by this time, the sick girl was smiling through her tears—tears that any emotion caused to gather so quickly in her eager blue eyes. But it is not on my own account, believe me, that I am cross and vexed. I cannot bear to think that you should go six days a week to teach in the houses of those odious purse-proud people at Stourchester.—I don't care, Margaret, how much you may protest—they are purse-proud, or at least some of them are—and all to spend your hard-earned sovereigns on idle, useless Aline—a peach here, a bag of hot-house grapes there; new books and new prints from London; flowers in my bedroom, and a new cage for my stupid old canary—while you grudge yourself a dress or a pair of boots. Don't deny it; you know you do. And then, Frank Darrell—'

'The less we say of poor Frank, the better,' returned Margaret hastily, as her colour faded, and the bright light in her honest eyes grew dim. 'He may have forgotten us, or he may be— We have not heard of him for much more than a year,' she added, turning away her face towards the window.

'My fault, from first to last,' cried Aline, in the old impetuous way. 'But for me, you would have been his wife; but for me, you would have married him—I know you would—when he pressed you so hard, just before he sailed on that last voyage. But papa's health was failing, and we were so soon to be thrown on the world, and you did not care to encumber your husband with a helpless, peevish pensioner like Aline Gray, and so—' Margaret, you are very brave; but do you think I do not know how much you have grieved for his loss, whether he be dead, or only dead to you!'

There was something beautiful in the patient affection with which Margaret soothed and fondled this poor restless sufferer into a quieter frame of mind, not arguing with her, but contenting herself with dropping a word here and there, that fell like oil upon the waters. Those who had taken the trouble—they were few indeed—to study Aline's disposition, could see in her the elements of a noble nature, somewhat warped by the strange and painful conditions of her life. To superficial observers, she had never seemed other than a spoiled child, with a mind as crooked as her body, and more ready to resent an injury, real or supposed, than to acknowledge a kindness. And yet it was Aline's deep sense of the gratitude she owed to her sister, that prompted her to potulance and almost revolt against the circumstances of her life.

The Stourchester people, and more particularly the few neighbours who dwelt in the outlying hamlet of Wood End, three miles from the town, where Aline and her sister lived, truly declared that Margaret was as a mother to the young invalid. To Margaret herself this appeared the most natural, matter-of-course thing in the world. From her own mother, on her death-bed, she had received the charge of sickly Aline as a sacred trust. 'In leaving her to you, Margaret,' Mrs Gray had said, 'I know that I give her into stronger hands than mine.' And indeed it was so, for Mrs Gray's well-meaning feebleness of purpose was ill fitted to cope with the storms of life. The vicar, himself a dreamy and unpractical man of letters, had survived his wife but a year; and when he died, and the girls, who had no near relative able and willing to give them shelter and protection, were left alone, it had devolved upon Margaret to provide for both. She had answered to the call, nobly. She was an excellent musician, and to her real talent and practised skill she added the power of making children love her, and learn all the more quickly because they wished to please her. It had not been without trouble, however, that she had fought her way into the position of the best-considered and most-sought-for music-mistress in the town near which she had settled. There were those who declared Miss Gray 'too pretty for a governess'; and others who could not readily forgive her the quiet ladylike manner, the dignity of which impressed them, unassuming as she was. But she had made her way at length; and by hard work, was enabled to keep up the little cottage at Wood End (she lived at Wood End partly for economy, Stourchester rents being high, and partly because Aline, who loved flowers and trees, seemed to wither when cooped up in a town), and to provide for her sickly sister the many little luxuries to which from infancy she had been accustomed.

Uncomplaining and cheerful, she went brightly and busily through each day's routine of duty; and only Aline's watchful eyes detected that the young sailor, Frank Darrell, was unforgotten.

'But if you must go, Margaret,' said Aline at last, 'I wish you were going to take some other way than that across those dreadful sands. I have a horror of those sands ever since, one day when you were away, I coaxed old Nanny into telling me some of those stories of shipwrecks, and smugglers, and people overtaken by the tide, that she is only too full of. There was one, in particular, of a girl, a bride, who went across to meet her bridegroom, and never was seen more, until her body was washed ashore, they say, at Warren Point, fifty miles along the coast. I wish you would go by Battle Bridge.'

'But consider, Aline, dearest,' said Margaret gently, 'the inland road by the bridge is over five miles at the least; whereas by the Stour and the sands—ah! don't shake your head, and look at me so imploringly—the road is barely three. Six miles of regular walking is enough, after pounding on so many pianos, and going through so many musical exercises; and I always dislike the days when the river is too full to allow me to cross by the stepping-stones, and I am compelled to toil round by the bridge. And as for the tide'—and here she picked up a local almanac that lay on the table, and consulted it with an air of mock-gravity—'why, I have become as learned in its ebbing and flowing as any ancient mariner on the jetty yonder. It leaves me plenty of time to-day to cross and recross dryshod. So now, Aline, I must kiss you again, and be off, for it will never do to keep Mrs Thrummett—Mrs Montague Thrummett—and her daughters waiting.'

So she spoke, and soon afterwards, with a rapid step, was wending her solitary way across the sands.

Stourchester, one of those anomalous English towns that belong, as it were, to two incongruous epochs, stands on a rising ground, overlooking the Stour, the tall chimneys of its factories contrasting oddly with the grand gray tower of the minster church. There are a few quaint mansions, too, built of mouldering stone, that is golden with lichens and discoloured by exposure to the weather; and queer old gardens, in which the monks and nuns raised their salads and pruned their peach-trees long ago; and fragments of the crumbling town-wall, sorely jostled by stuccoed villas and brand-new terraces. For Stourchester, with its manufactures, is a thriving place; and Margaret had chosen wisely in selecting it as the spot where she, the bread-winner of that modest, thrifty household at Wood End, could most easily earn her own livelihood and that of her ailing sister.

It was fortunate for the ancient town of Stourchester that it had, in its old age, formed that alliance with novel forms of manufacturing industry, which were evidenced by the black smoke that floated lazily away inland, for its former source of prosperity had long since ceased to be available. The place had been a seaport once, but that was in early days; and even two centuries before, the harbour had been gradually silted up, and the prosperity of the town on the decline. The very river had deserted its traditional channel, and now ran at a considerable distance from the walls, that it was said, in worm-eaten chronicles,

to lave; and indeed the Stour, shrunken and dwindled as to its volume, since sundry canals and aqueducts had levied toll upon its headwaters, trickles but feebly, through the midst of shoals and sandbanks, to the sea. The estuary of the river, however, is still as broad as of old, presenting a fine broad expanse of smooth sand, that glistens silver-bright when first the sea rolls back from the river-mouth, and that presently lies yellow, and firm, and dry, affording the readiest road by which to cross from Wood End and the adjoining villages to Stourchester.

The sands have an ill name along the coast, partly due, no doubt, to the popular taste for the horrible and mysterious, and partly to genuine anecdotes of local mishap. That lives had been lost there, again and again, was but too true. The passage between Stourchester and the coast villages could be effected, in fair weather, and with common precautions, with perfect safety. But it was otherwise when the tide was unusually high, or when a strong gale from the seaward forced the salt flood into the narrowing mouth of the Stour, for on these occasions the danger of being belated on the sands was great indeed. There were legends, authentic enough, of a mad race for life and death between some well-mounted horseman and the swift advance of the tide; with other and sadder histories of children or of wanderers unacquainted with the district, who had lost their way upon the twilight expanse of the sands, and so perished. There was talk, too, of a shifting quicksand, the terror of the coast, that, at flood-tides and irregular intervals, appeared to claim its victims from among the heedless passengers. Nanny, the old woman who was Margaret and Aline's domestic factotum, was garrulous concerning these perils; but Miss Gray, who was naturally courageous, merely laughed at them. 'Nobody, so far as I can learn'—she used to say in answer to Nanny's boding expostulations—'has ever been lost on the sands yet, except through some extraordinary carelessness or rashness. Depend upon it, Nanny, that I shall keep much too cautious an eye upon the nautical almanac to furnish you with materials for another story. When the tide comes in at an awkward hour, I must go round by Battle Bridge, and that is all; but when the water is out, I greatly prefer the stepping-stones.'

It was easy and pleasant enough, on that August day, to cross from Wood End, nestling among its coppices and hedgerows, and Stourchester, rising conspicuous on its sloping hill, and overlooking at once the coast-line and the country inland, where the river ran peacefully between osier-beds and green meadows in which the cattle were quietly browsing; while here and there, a wreath of blue smoke shewed where a lonely farm lay amidst its sheltering elms. In the opposite direction, far away, the gray waters of the retreating sea were visible; while here and there a miniature lagoon remained in some depression of the sands; and Margaret loitered for a moment as she passed, to watch the star-fish moving their bejewelled limbs among the lumps of variegated sea-weed, and the small red crabs crawling briskly at the bottom of the shallow pool. The Stour, like many another stream, divides its scanty waters into several tiny channels ere it reaches the sea, and these were traversed at low-tide by the help of a series of stones, rugged with the shell-fish that

elung to them, and fringed with long green weed, but which afforded a sufficient bridge to one whose foot was as sure, and her eyes as quick, as those of Margaret Gray. There was something threatening in the gloom of the day and in the signs of the weather. The wind had nearly died away, but a heavy bank of clouds darkened the horizon to seaward, and there was almost a warning shrillness in the harsh note of the white-winged gull, that flew screaming along the tiny river's tortuous course.

The music-lessons over at last! the wearied instructress was free to bend her steps homeward. No very notable change in the weather had as yet occurred, but the bank of clouds that lay piled up against the far-off sky-line was now a mountainous rampart of billowy vapour, edged with a lurid glow, as of huge masses of heated copper, where its summits caught the rays of the declining sun. The sea-birds, in greater numbers than before, flitted shrieking past, as if in search of a haven, before the storm should test their strength; and from the distant waters came a low, sullen murmur, as the waves chafed upon the reef of half-submerged rocks that lay beyond the smooth stretch of the sands.

'We shall have a rough night of it, miss,' said an old Nestor of a fisherman, in striped night-cap and heavy surf-boots, who was mending a cable that had been drawn up for repairs, high and dry on the beach, intermitting the strokes of his hammer to give a neighbourly greeting to the young lady as she passed him by. 'You are in luck, to be so near port, but it *will* rain by sundown.'

Unwonted sounds, indicative of bustle and confusion, reached Margaret's ears as she approached her humble home: the buzz and clatter of unfamiliar voices, the tread of feet, and the slamming of doors. Quickening her steps, she reached the cottage, to find the narrow passage and the little sitting-room occupied by several women, wives, mostly, of the cottagers who dwelt near, and who were all friends and gossips of Nanny. Among them was Nanny herself, wringing her hands, and evidently very much frightened, while the chorus of females kept up a well-meant but utterly useless clamour of advice.

'Burnt feathers is best!' said one erone oracularly.

'Try the drops, Nanny—there's nothing like the drops!' urged a second.

'Poor thing; 'tis a dead swoon. There's nothing could do her good now but three sprigs of rosemary, gathered at the full of the moon, and'—

But this learned recipe was left uncompleted, for now Margaret burst impatiently through the group, and stood beside the couch whereon Aline lay, the centre of the chattering crowd. One glance was sufficient to ascertain the cause of the turmoil. There lay the sufferer, her blue eyes half-closed, and staring at vacancy, with the fixed stony gaze of a statue, her pale lips slightly parted, her teeth set, and the slender fingers of her white hands clenched, as if in the act of grappling with some invisible foe. Her fair hair hung loose over her shoulders, and her whole attitude was one that indicated pain, not rest. And yet no sculptured effigy could have been more still, more mute and motionless, than she was, or, to all appearance, more unconscious of the fond eager words and caressing touch of the sister whom she loved so

well. Marble-white she lay, and nothing but the feeblest flutter of the labouring heart told that she was yet to be numbered among the living. The first shock of the discovery over, Margaret's sound common-sense and resolute will reasserted themselves. Once, and once only, had she seen Aline stretched before her in such a state of pain and helplessness. They had both been much younger then, Aline a mere child; and Margaret could well remember the alarm that she and her mother had shared, and how anxious had been the interval of suspense while medical skill did battle with the fell disease, and life was gradually enabled to gain the victory. The symptoms were, if anything, less startling than those that dwelt in Margaret's memory; and if professional aid could avail then, surely it would do so now. There was a good doctor at Wood End, a surgeon, but with a physician's diploma from some northern university, and him she had consulted more than once on Aline's account.

'Keep quiet, please, and do not crowd round the sofa so much. Let her have air. I will go to Dr Smith myself.'

Margaret made the best of her way along the straggling street of the village, and found the doctor at his own door, in the act of setting foot on the step of his gig, drawn by the well-known brown horse with the white streak down its face, familiar in park and hamlet throughout that country-side.

'I am glad, Miss Gray, that you have caught me,' said the good-natured surgeon; 'I can spare a few moments to visit your sister, and make up for it by sharp driving afterwards. I am called into the country, nine miles off, on rather a serious case; old Archdeacon Allport down again with his old enemy the gout, and they fear it is determined to the head this time.'

So saying, he hurried to the cottage, and by a rough but kindly assertion of his despotic authority in such instances, cleared the house of all the well-meaning but useless volunteers who encumbered it, only leaving Nanny and an especial ally of hers, the widow of a fisherman, and whom he knew to be more helpful and less garrulous than most of her class.

'There is no immediate danger,' said the doctor, after his inspection had come to a close, and Margaret could have blessed him for the welcome words; 'but these seizures, even when least severe, are among the very gravest disorders which we medical men have to deal with, and the rather that they only occur where the constitution is peculiar, and the general health weak. You are too brave and too sensible, Miss Gray, to render it necessary that I should disguise the truth from you. I will write a prescription—I cannot furnish the ingredients, for, unluckily, I have them not in my surgery—which can be properly made up at Cooper's, the principal Stourchester chemist, whose address in the High Street you know. Your sister ought to take it as soon as possible—the earlier the better; and on its being promptly supplied, say in the course of a couple of hours, depends—mark me, not her recovery—she will probably recover—but the quick and certain return of her powers of speech and of movement. A great shock might bring her round, without help from the pharmacopœia; but this is best and safest. It is a potent preparation, compounded of drugs, poisonous

for the most part, and such as no respectable chemist would give you without medical warrant; but see! I have written my name and address in full, and they know my handwriting at Cooper's well enough. Now, I must go, or the archdeacon! — And an instant afterwards, the roll of wheels told that the doctor was speeding on his road.

Margaret only bent forward to kiss Aline's cold cheek, then caught up the precious sheet of paper, marked with cabalistic characters, at the foot of which was appended the signature of George Haynes Smith, Holly Lodge, Wood End, and turned to the door.

'Take care of her, Nanny, while I am gone,' she said earnestly; 'and remember the doctor's desire, that air should be admitted in plenty, as at present, and that no one should come in but yourself and good Mrs Brooks there. I shall be back again with the medicine as soon as I can.'

'But you are not going, Miss Margaret, out across the sands again?' cried Nanny, aghast. 'Why, any one can see there's a storm coming on that it would be hard for a man to face, let alone a lady like you. Better wait till I can run up to Farmer Burnett's, on the hill, and beg him to loan you his gig, or, anyhow, a spring-cart and horse, and a lad to drive it, and so go round by Battle Bridge; though, as ill-luck will have it, it happens to be Fettesham market-day, and the master and mistress!'

But already Margaret had got beyond reach of the old woman's voice, and was speeding rapidly onwards, crossing the Stour by the stepping-stones, and taking her solitary way across the darkling sands.

DERISIVE PUNISHMENTS.

TIMES are considerably changed since ridicule formed a part of ordinary judicial punishment. Sometimes the suffering inflicted went beyond a derisive public exhibition. It was hard for ladies of a political turn of mind, as the Countess of Buchan learned, when, after Bruce's defeat at Methven, she fell into the hands of the foes of the warrior upon whose head she had placed the Scottish crown. 'As she did not strike with the sword, so she shall not die with the sword,' said King Edward, in his cruel mercy condemning the patriotic lady to be confined in a crown-shaped wooden cage, of strong lattice-work barred with iron, and hung in air from a turret of Berwick Castle, 'for a spectacle and everlasting reproach.' It was poor consolation for the prisoner to know that Bruce's sister and daughter were exhibited in the same manner, one at Roxburgh Castle, and the other in the Tower. When ladies of high degree were treated as though they were wild beasts, we are not surprised to learn that a very long time ago—so long ago that the date has been lost—a parson at Broughton-Hackett, Worcestershire, found guilty of aiding a farmer's wife to get rid of her spouse, was put in a strong cage, and suspended on Churchill Big Oak, with a leg of mutton and trimmings within his sight, but beyond his reach, and so starved to death.

Caging, however, was hardly a recognised form of punishment in England, the pillory being the legal instrument of punishment by exposure. It

was simply the Anglo-Saxon 'stretch neck'—a folding-board with a hole in the centre for the admission of the criminal's neck—with two additional holes for the hands, fastened to the top of a pole fixed upon a stool or platform. No more disagreeable penalty could have been hit upon for adulterers, cheating traders, forestallers, dice-coggers, forgers, fortune-tellers, public liars, cut-purses, and vagabonds having no claim upon the friendliness of the multitude, at liberty to pelt the unlucky rogue with mud, garbage, and stones at discretion. Charles I.'s Star Chamber turned the pillory into an engine of political oppression; in their tyrannic shortsightedness, making it a place of honour, rather than of degradation, for, when men like Leighton, Prynne, and Lilburne stood in Palace Yard, the sympathising crowd hailed them, not as felons, but as heroes, for boldly declaiming against misdoings in high places, at a time when a man could be condemned to lose his ears for calling Land 'a little urchin' in a private letter to a friend. The archbishop and his satellites did their master very ill service in giving occasion for the scene in Palace Yard on the 30th of June 1637, thus described in one of Strafford's letters: 'In the palace yard two pillories were erected, and there the sentence against Burton, Bastwick, and Prynne was executed. They stood two hours in the pillory. The place was full of people, who cried and howled terribly, especially when Burton was cropped. Dr Bastwick was very merry; his wife, Dr Poe's daughter, got on a stool and kissed him. His ears being cut off, she called for them, put them in a clean handkerchief, and carried them away with her. Bastwick told the people, the lords had their collar-days at court, but this was his collar-day, rejoicing much in it.' Fifty-six years later, Daniel Defoe stood unabashed in the pillory at the Temple, amid a heap of garlands, flung by a crowd of well-wishers.

A stranger scene still was witnessed at Charing Cross in 1758. Dr John Shebbeare was in that year sentenced to three years' imprisonment, and to stand one hour in the pillory, for writing certain *Letters to the People of England*, insisting that France owed her grandeur, and England her misfortunes to the undue influence of Hanover in the British council-chambers. Upon the 5th of December, a pillory was erected at Charing Cross, to which the culprit was brought in one of the City state-coaches by Under-sheriff Beardmore, who handed him into the pillory, and left him to stand there at his ease; neither his head nor his hands were inclosed in the pillory holes, and a richly dressed servant held an umbrella over the doctor's head, to fend off the rain. The under-sheriff was arraigned for neglecting his duty, and although he contended he had fulfilled the letter of the law, was fined and imprisoned for his indulgent interpretation. The Irishman who acted as footman on the occasion was not satisfied with the guinea he received for his trouble, saying to Shebbeare: 'Only think of the disgrace, your honour!' and the doctor was obliged to save the indignity with an extra crown. A greater man than the Devonshire surgeon, Lord Cochrane, of Basque Roads fame, was sentenced in 1814 to be pilloried. Upon Sir Francis Burdett declaring his intention of standing by his colleague's side in the pillory, the government, not caring to risk the consequences, wisely ignored that part of the sentence, and rested

satisfied with degrading, fining, and imprisoning the famous sea-fighter. Exposure in the pillory has sometimes proved fatal. In 1756, the Smithfield drovers pelted two perjured thief-takers so severely that one of them died; in 1763, a man was done to death at Bow in the same way; and in 1780, a coachman, named Read, expired in the pillory before his time was up. In 1816, the punishment was abolished for all offences save perjury, and in 1837 put an end to altogether.

The stocks, which answered the purpose of a pillory, were often made to serve as whipping-posts also, by carrying their supporting posts to a convenient height, and affixing iron clasps to hold the offender's wrists. Sometimes a single post fixed in front of a bench answered the double purpose equally well; a pair of iron clasps on the top being used in whipping-cases, and another pair fixed below sufficing for ankle-holders. Every parish had its stocks. 'Coming home to-night,' writes Pepys, 'a drunken boy was carried by our constable to our new pair of stocks, to handseil them.' They were generally erected near the churchyard, or by the roadside, a little way out. Driving along a country road, one may often come upon such a relic of the past, nearly hidden by weeds of many years' growth. London, of course, was liberally provided for in this way: writing in 1630, Taylor the Water-poet says:

In London, and within a mile, I ween,
There are of jails or prisons full eighteen;
And sixty whipping-posts and stocks and cages.

The City stocks stood near the Exchange end of Cheapside, and must have occupied a goodly space of ground, for, when they were pulled down in 1668, Pepys said the clearance made the coming into Cornhill and Lombard Street 'mighty noble.' Long after the stocks had vanished, their memory was preserved by the Stocks Market, where Sir Robert Viner's transmogrified statue of Sobieski did duty for His Majesty King Charles II. triumphing over a turban-crowned Cromwell, until the market itself was swept away in 1736, to make room for the Mansion-house. Episcopal palaces would appear to have had stocks attached to them. One Sunday, in 1631, Shakspeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* was privately performed at the Bishop of Lincoln's house in London. The consequence of an inquiry into the matter was, that a Mr Wilson, as the special plotter and contriver of the business, and the player of the part of Bottom, was condemned to sit from six in the morning to six at night in the stocks at the porter's lodge of the bishop's house, the ass's head on his shoulders, a bottle of hay before him, and a derisive inscription on his breast.

In 1736, the good people of Whitstable were edified by the sight of a doctor and a clergyman sitting side by side in the stocks for swearing at one another. In 1827, a man was placed in the stocks in St Nicholas's Churchyard, Newcastle, for disturbing the congregation by entering the church during service-time, and shouting: 'Bell for ever!' Mr Bell being the popular candidate for the county. A similar piece of misconduct, without the excuse of electioneering excitement, upon the part of one Mark Tuck, led to the revival of the institution at Newbury a year or so ago. Twenty-six years had elapsed since the stocks had been tenanted, and the butter market was thronged with sight-

seers anxious to see how the victim would take his punishment. He did not appreciate their kind attentions, and saluted every chiming of the church clock with expressions of thankfulness. After four hours' exposure to the derision of the crowd, Tuck was released, and lost no time in making his way home, without staying to thank those who had revived an old custom for his especial benefit.

A German dame who let her tongue wag too freely about her neighbours, used to be compelled to stand upon a block in the market-place, with a heavy stone dangling from her neck, shaped either like a bottle, a loaf, an oval dish, or representing a woman putting out her tongue; unless she happened to be rich enough to buy permission to exchange the shameful stone for a bag of hops tied round with red ribbon. In 1637, a woman of Sandwich, in Kent, venturing to take liberties with the good name of 'Mrs Mayoress,' had to walk through the streets of the town, preceded by a man tinkling a small bell, bearing an old broom upon her shoulder, from the end of which dangled a wooden mortar. Staffordshire scolds did not get off so easily. They had to follow the bell-man until they shewed unmistakable signs of repentance, debarred from giving any one a bit of their mind by the branks, or scolds' bridle, an ingenious arrangement of metal hoops contrived to clasp the head and the neck firmly, while the padlock behind remained locked, while a spiked plate pressed upon the tongue, so as effectually to preclude its owner making any use of it. The branks, however, was not peculiar to Staffordshire; it was in use in Scotland centuries ago. In 1574, two quarrelsome Glasgow bodies were bound over to keep the peace, on pain of being 'brankt.' Pennant says the authorities of Langholm, in Dumfriesshire, always kept one in readiness for immediate use, and plenty of specimens are yet to be seen in different places in England. One preserved at Walton-on-Thames is of thin iron, with a less terrible bit than that of the Staffordshire branks, being only a piece of flat iron some two inches long, to keep the wearer's tongue quiet by simple pressure. This instrument bears the date of 1633 on an inscription running:

Chester presents Walton with a bridle,
To curb women's tongues that talk so idle—

a couplet explained by a story of a Mr Chester losing an estate through a mischief-making woman's tongue, and commemorating his loss by presenting Walton with its scolds' bridle. Dr Plot, the Staffordshire historian, is loud in his praise of this odd device for reforming clamorous women. 'I look upon it,' says he, 'as much to be preferred to the cucking-stool, which not only endangers the health of the party, but also gives the tongue liberty 'twixt every dip, to neither of which this is liable; it being such a bridle for the tongue as not only quite deprives them of speech, but brings shame for the transgression, and humility thereupon, before it is taken off.'

The worthy antiquary was mistaken in supposing the cucking-stool to be one and the same thing with the ducking-stool, whereas it had nothing whatever to do with the cold-water cure for hot-tempered shrews. Borlase calls it 'the seat of infamy,' whereon Cornish scolds were condemned to abide the derision of passers-by for such time as the bailiffs of the manor thought the

occasion demanded. In Leicester it was customary to set the offender upon the stool at her own door, and then carry her in turn to each of the four town gates. In Montgomery, it was not used as a seat at all, the culprit having to stand upon it with naked feet and dishevelled hair. In Scotland, alewives convicted of selling bad ale were set upon the cuck-stool while the liquor was distributed to the poor folk, for whom, however bad it might be, it was considered apparently good drink enough. In 1572 a new cucking-stool cost the parish of Kingston-upon-Thames 7s. 6d. for timber, 3s. for ironwork, 4s. 10d. for wheels and brasses, and 8s. for the matting; a total outlay of L.1, 3s. 4d.—no mean item in parochial expenditure, as money went three hundred years ago. The ducking-stool was a strong chair fastened to the end of a pole, or beam, projecting over a river, well, or water-trough. We do not know that we can better Misson's description of it: 'They fasten an arm-chair to the end of two strong beams, twelve or fifteen feet long, and parallel to each other. The chair hangs upon a sort of axle, on which it plays freely, so as always to remain in the horizontal position. The scold being well fastened in her chair, the two beams are then placed, as near to the centre as possible, across a post on the water-side; and being lifted up behind, the chair, of course, drops into the cold element.' However inferior in efficacy to the branks, the ducking-stool had the advantage in affording more amusement to onlookers. Amusing to spectators, no doubt, but it was a cruel pastime, and has very properly gone out of use.

Some queans with inveterate habits of scolding were not to be cured by the watery ordeal: in 1681, a Mrs Finch, who had been ducked three several times, was convicted as a common scold for a fourth time, and fined three marks, the Court of King's Bench ordering her to be in prison till she paid the fine. In 1745, the hostess of the *Queen's Head*, at Kingston in Surrey, was ducked under Kingston Bridge. This is the latest instance we know of, in England at least; but a woman named Mary Davis underwent the like discipline somewhere in America so lately as 1818.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—THE APPOINTED TIME.

BAD news? Of course, there was. Who is it that has reached middle life, and been so fortunate as never to have experienced that moment, when he has been called aside, it may be, from some scene of pleasure, or from one, at least, wherein his 'bosom's lord sat lightly on its throne,' by some unwilling messenger of woe! Whether it be friend or servant, there is no mistaking the nature of his errand. Before the 'O sir, come home at once!' of the one, or the 'Friend, I am sorry to bring you evil tidings,' of the other, is spoken, we know that Fate has done us some ill turn. And if this be so on ordinary occasions, how much more when we have reason to fear her malice! That bad news had come respecting John, Maggie was as well aware as they who brought it; she only dared to hope that it was not the worst. Nay, beyond that deep, in her case, lay a lower deep, for she knew not what that worst might be.

'A letter came this morning, Maggie,' said Mr Linch, since her father, after feeling blindly about him for a chair, had sat him down, and remained silent, as though unequal to the task he had proposed to himself—'a letter from shipboard.'

'From John? Oh, give it me!'

'No; not from John. It is from the captain of the ship in which John sailed, it seems, from Liverpool, some three weeks ago.'

'So late as that!' ejaculated Maggie, not without thankfulness. He had not been safe, then, when Blake had threatened him, but was still in England. Thank Heaven, he had not known his risk!

'Yes; he grew worse, it appears, after he had left home—much worse—and was not able to go on board. Nor, when he did go, was he fit to bear the voyage.'

'Give me the letter!' cried she, rising suddenly, and tottering towards them.

'One moment, dear Maggie; for your father's sake, and little Willie's, be calm. God's way is right, whatever way He wills; and He who permits the blow, can give the balm.'

'Dead, dead, dead!' cried Maggie wildly, and would have fallen on the floor, but that the lawyer caught her in his arms. She lay in a dead faint upon the sofa; yet, when her father's trembling fingers untied the little collar about her neck, and would have loosened her gown about her bosom, she sat up like a corpse revived by a miracle. 'The paper, the paper!' cried she, remembering the sacred trust that lay there.

'Do you mean the letter, darling?'

'Yes, yes; the letter.' Oh, thanks to Heaven, even in that hour, when Heaven itself had made her desolate, that his secret was still safe and in her keeping! They put the letter into her hand, but she could not read it; not, alas! for tears—what would she not have given for tsars—but because the face she should never more behold in life obscured it.

So the lawyer read it to her. It was a formal communication enough, though couched in words of kind consideration. The captain had written, as was his duty, to state that his passenger, John Milbank, an invalid from the first, had died in mid-passage, between Liverpool and New York. It was the sick man's wish that the news of his decease should be sent to Mr Thorne, at Hilton; his widow, he had said, would understand why no direct message had been sent to her; but there was a lock of hair inclosed, sealed up by the dying man himself, which was for her own hand.

Maggie took the little packet eagerly, and clasped it close, for was there not a secret also in that lock of snow! 'Is that all?' she whispered.

'Yes; that was all. The captain had written that she would understand,' said Mr Linch, not without a touch, not, indeed, of curiosity, but of interrogation in his tone.

'Yes, yes; I do understand,' answered she. 'It is better so.' Both marvelled in their own minds,

doubtless, to hear her answer thus, but forbore to question further. 'Dead, dead, dead!' murmured she again, 'and I had only just learned to love him!'

'He loved *you*, darling, I am sure,' said her father simply; 'and if he sees you now, this anguish must needs pain him: for his sake, then, take comfort.'

'And remember, Maggie,' put in Mr Linch, not very appositely, 'he is gone where no sorrow can touch him more, and, therefore, we ought not to grieve for him.'

They said, indeed, what they could, those two to comfort her, but

Common is the commonplace,
And vacant chaff well meant for grain.

There was no comfort for her. She sat with one hand pressed on her two treasures, the old and new one, and with her heated eyes fixed on the floor, revolving nothing. A sense—not numbed, alas! but dull—of utter lack and loneliness possessed her wholly: the world seemed emptied of all life and love, and heaven a void beyond it. Yet it was not so; for presently a little hand was placed in hers, and a little mouth lifted up to kiss her cheek; and at that potent touch, and at those broken tones, unmeaning as any wizard's spell, but with ten times its magic, the succour came, and she bent down on little Willie's neck dissolved in tears.

'That was a good thought of yours, to bring the child,' whispered Mrs Morden to the engraver approvingly; 'and I fetched him in, you see, at the very nick of time.'

The relief, indeed, to Maggie's overburdened heart was instantaneous, and in a little while her strength began to rally, and she was able to listen to what was said to her.

'You will forgive me for mentioning the matter at such a time,' said Mr Linch, in his professional tones, 'but it is my duty to inform you—in case you may not be aware of the circumstance—of the existence of a certain document in your husband's desk.'

In an instant, her grief was put aside, her desolation forgotten, and every nerve and sense became alive to defend, not her husband, indeed, but his memory.

'There is nothing there,' said she, in a calm resolute voice, 'except some private letters. Has he ever told you that there was?'

'Indeed, he has,' answered the lawyer, with considerable anxiety in his manner. 'And if you have not made a thorough search, Mrs Milbank, I must entreat you to permit me to do so. The matter is pressing, not only through the time that has elapsed since your husband's decease, but because, while the fate of Mr Richard Milbank is still uncertain, there will be serious difficulty, in case the document should be mislaid or lost.'

'Were you yourself made acquainted with its contents?' gasped Maggie, her thoughts fixed solely upon the paper that she had taken from

the desk, and unable to grasp the importance of any other.

'Most certainly, I was. I have remonstrated more than once with poor Mr John on his keeping in such a place of custody a document so momentous. I speak, of course, madam, of your late husband's will, which I drew up myself, in accordance with his instructions, and for which I feel in some sort personally responsible. It would set my mind at ease—which, I confess, is troubled by what you have just told me—if you would permit me to satisfy myself.'

Maggie pointed assentingly towards the desk, to which the lawyer flew at once, like a greyhound slipped from the leash. She was relieved to find that John had not made this man his confidant, but only herself. She would have something in common yet, with her dead husband, that no other soul should share.

'Thank Heaven, I have found the will!' cried Mr Linch presently, 'without which we could scarcely have moved a step.' Then, as if conscious how unbecoming was a tone of triumph at such a moment, he added: 'Riches, it is true, cannot purchase comfort; but poverty, believe me, has always power, when the first shock is over, to make our woe more bitter.'

If Maggie heard, she did not understand his words: her eyes were riveted on the child, who had toddled away to the window, and was playing at 'Bo-peep' in the curtains that had once concealed the form of Mr Inspector Brain.

'Your daughter is a widow indeed, Thorne,' whispered the lawyer; 'she cares not whether she has been left all or nothing.'

'Yes; I always said John would make the best of husbands; and so it turned out,' answered the engraver softly. 'She hears nothing that we say, she sees nothing that goes on before her, not even little Willie yonder. Her thoughts are with the dead.'

'Don't you think, Thorne, if I were to read the will, or at least state the terms of it, it would do her good—distract her mind, poor soul?'

The engraver shook his head: he had himself known what it is to love and lose what seems our all. 'O no,' he answered.—'Maggie, darling—Maggie—shall we stay here, or shall we go, and leave you to yourself? We wish to do what is best, and most to your mind.'

He rose and kissed her: the daughter, who, when she was but an infant, had been his comfort under the severest woe that can wring man's heart: the daughter, who, as she grew up, had gladdened him with her beauty, her diligence, her wisdom (save only on one point), her skill, her sympathy: the daughter, who had made her choice at last, in obedience to his will, and whose prosperous and peaceful life, since then, had been the crowning happiness of his old age: the daughter, whom it was his turn to comfort now.

'Yes, yes; I have *you* left, I know, dearest,' sighed she, as if in answer to his caresses. 'Forgive me, father, if I seemed to have forgotten it.'

'Does my being here soothe you, Maggie; or would you rather, for the present, be alone with

your grief? Do not fear to speak the truth; I shall not be hurt.'

'I would rather be alone, father.'

'Then it shall be so, darling. Shall we take the child with us?'

'No; please to leave the child.'

Her plaintive tenderness had itself something childlike about it, which moved both her visitors; and they left her, without remonstrance, as she desired. Then she took down an ancient Bible, clasped, and with large pictures in it, which was Willie's delight, but only shewn to him on high and rare occasions, when he had been 'good for ever so long,' and laid it down upon the floor before him; and having thus insured his silence and attention for some time to come, she locked the parlour-door, and sat her down, and drew forth the sealed packet from her bosom—for the time had come at last for her to read it.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—GAIN AND ABEL.

Reader, has it ever been your cruel duty to open the desk of a dead friend, or, worse, of a beloved son who has been taken from you in his manhood, and to read the records hitherto reserved for his own eyes? He is in heaven, with the angels: you have no doubt of that; and yet, it may be, there will be something—you know not what—some revelation of his shortcomings awaiting you, which you would gladly have been spared. It can prove him no worse than others; nay, you know him to have been better; but, at such a time, any evidence of his weakness will, you feel, jar sadly on your tender regrets, and put the green wound of loss to torture.

So was it with poor Maggie, as she held that packet in her hand, and broke its seal with trembling fingers. Nay, her state was far more pitiable, for proof of 'shortcoming' and 'weakness' there needs must be, by the necessity of the case—with her the question was, What worse? Oh, why need it be answered! Why not leave all untold till the great Day, when every secret shall be disclosed to the All-Merciful! Because her husband himself had willed it otherwise—'For my wife: to be opened when I am dead,' was the sentence beneath her eyes; and he *was* dead; and, above all things, she must do his bidding.

John Milbank's hand had been a good, but clerically one, characteristic—as those would say who see a significance in such matters—of his own orderly and undemonstrative nature; but the writing which now met Maggie's gaze was hurried and uneven, as though the fingers that had held the pen had struggled to keep pace with the winged thought in vain, and caught but half its meaning. There were blots and dashes; but, like the lesson which the schoolboy knows by heart, and writes at speed, there was not a single space to mark the pause made by Reflection.

'Shall I be dead, I wonder,' it began, 'or only dead to you, dear Maggie, when your eyes first light upon these words? Oh, dead, I hope, and so beyond your hate; for if I live, no matter though the seas should be between us, and half this woful world, I should feel, I know, the sting of your revilings, the barb of your abhorrence and contempt. They are not my due, I call that God to witness in whose dread presence I shall stand and tell the tale that now I tell to you; and yet they will be mine, when I have told it. I see your

shudder of disgust and loathing, and feel myself an oncast from your heart, condemned already unjustly, though not unheard. Oh, what a life has mine been!—if I can call it mine, since nowhere can I take it up, and find it undissociated with your own—now full of melancholy vain regrets, and hopeless longings and despair! Surely, surely, beyond the grave I yearn for, there must be peace at last, though heaven there cannot be, since you are parted from me! Pity me, pity me, a little, Maggie, before you shall have read on, and reached what must needs quench all pity.'

His written prayer was answered, for Maggie's tears were falling in a rain of pity, that blotted out his words, till she could read no more, but sat bowed down in silence, save for the rustling of the pictured leaves of the great book, as the child turned them hither and thither without a plan, and babbled his content. Then once more she read on.

'From my earliest days, I loved you, when we were children both, and Richard was a child, whose wayward tempers pleased you even then far better than my poor devotion. I was shy and silent, and had nothing to attract your love; while he—he had but to smile—nay, only not to frown—and all our little world was at his feet. I felt how inferior I was to him—if it was impossible, indeed, not to do so, since my uncle, Mrs Morden, and every one with whom I was brought into contact, made me feel it—yet, as I honestly believe, without envy; for I loved Richard myself, and envied him only one thing in the world—your love.

'We grew up, and still I loved him; did my best to give him pleasure, to shield his faults, and to extenuate them with my uncle. If a grain of bitterness was in my heart, I knew it not; it had not sprung up into the green blade of jealousy. There was a glamour about the lad that blinded me, like all the rest. I did not dream what I now know, that all I did was done in thankless service to a worthless client. That jars upon you, Maggie; I feel it as I write; yet I must speak the truth, as I have spoken it, perchance, by this time, before a more impartial Judge than you. I am not defending myself; the man who does so, has some hope of clearance, of forgiveness, or of remission of punishment; and I have no such hope. I shall, for certain, never see you, hear you, touch you, more: the desolation of that thought is unspeakable; it overwhelms me utterly, and but that I have passed my word to you, to wait Heaven's own good time to die, I would end all, this moment. I am not defending myself, but I have left a memory upon earth, from which I would fain wipe an undeserved stain; and to be just to it, I must speak truth, Maggie.

'By the time that I had come to man's estate, it was understood—indeed, my uncle told me so, with his own lips, not knowing the pain he caused me (though, if he had known, he would have told me still)—that you were one day to be Richard's bride; and from that moment, I strove to put you from my heart, to live my life without that hope which was the breath of it—to forget you, to forsake you. Uncle Matthew knew about it. I besought him, upon my knees, to let me go elsewhere, away from Hilton, not to doom me to be the spectator of Richard's triumph. But I was useful to him in his trade, for which my brother had no aptitude, and he refused to let me go. I do not blame him;

I blame none but one. The old man knew not what it was to love, or, at least, to love like me. "Take some other girl," said he, "and she will cure your itch for this one." It would have been good advice to most men of my age; but to me it was useless. I had no eyes for other girls but you, though you were blind to me. If you had not been so, you must have noticed how I shrank from your society, avoided the temptation of your presence, and when I could not avoid, resisted it. It was to lead my mind away from you, quite as much as through any natural diligence of my own, that I applied myself to business, and shewed no fancy for the pleasures that attracted others of my years. There was, it seemed, but one pleasure in life for me—the right to call you mine, and that Fate had denied me. Yet not for a single instant did the idea occur to me of usurping Richard's place; not because it was impossible to do so (although I knew it was so), but because I had so reverent a regard for the object of my brother's love. It would have been bliss even to think of you as mine—I dreamt of it sometimes, when Heaven seemed to have sent the dream, and Hell the waking—but I never permitted myself to do so. You were sacred from me; an adored, but forbidden thing. It might have been so to the end, perhaps, had not Richard himself proved base. He had won you, and, for all I knew up to that time, was worthy of you; he had not, indeed, that reverence for you which I had, and wore that gracious prize—your love—as lightly as the flower in his button-hole. But that was his way—a way that pleased you well, and therefore was the right one. I was very humble, and confessed my way the wrong; and if I could not wish him joy, I wished Richard no harm, and certainly not the greatest harm of all—that he should lose you. I knew he drank and gamed, but was content, for your sake and for his, to deem such errors but spots upon the surface, blots of youth, which time would cleanse. I did not judge him by myself, who had no taste for cards or wine, and therefore was not tempted. But a day came when perforce my eyes were opened, and I saw clearly what this Richard was. You have heard how, when my uncle was on his deathbed, or supposed to be so, some thief, disguised, pistol in hand, compelled him to set his name beneath some bond. A cowardly and cruel deed, in any man, but in one to whom he had been Benefactor, a crime unparalleled for baseness and for greed. Men said indeed that it was Richard, but I, for one, denied it, as you know. It could not be, for Richard was as the apple of his eye, whose trespass he had forgiven a score of times, and to whom he had left all he loved on earth—his gold. Yet it was Richard. Uncle Matthew told me so with his own lips, an hour before his death.

"I have no hopes of the wild lad," he said, "unless Maggie Thorne should wed him; yet, because I loved him once, I have given him one chance, which, if any grain of grace is left in him, he cannot miss. If the remembrance of his old uncle shall induce him only to see my body put in earth, he shall still go shares with you, John, in what I have to leave."

I think the old man meant me to give him warning; and I did so; but I was sorely tempted to be silent, not, Heaven knows! that I coveted my brother's portion, but, because, if he was

poor, that might have been an obstacle to his marriage—at all events, for the present, and I was already bent upon deferring, and, if possible, preventing it. Even yet, I swear, I never thought of substituting myself for him, but only of saving you from such a mate. It seemed so horrible that my uncle, who had such good cause to know how vile he was, should have thought of Richard only, not of you. He had no hopes for him, he had said, unless Maggie Thorne should become his wife. But what hopes, if that happened, thought I, could there be for Maggie Thorne!

"You know on what sort of terms we brothers lived together here at Rosebank, and who it was that led the other a dog's life. Well, I bore all that. It was nothing, or next to nothing, compared with what I suffered when I thought of the life he would one day lead you. Never shall I forget the hour when I first found out—what was a well-worn jest with his gay companions—that he was faithless to you. That seemed to me—who was faithful to you without cause—a heinous crime and blasphemy. Not you yourself, had it come to your own ears, could have resented it with a greater indignation. I had long known that he was unworthy of you; that not one of your many virtues had any reflection in him; but I had hitherto believed that at least your love for him was reciprocated. But now I felt how hard, indeed, it was that Richard, who could be happy with another, should become your husband, while I, who had no happiness save in you, should live my life alone. For the first time, the thought of supplanting him was sown within me, and though I strove to tread it down, it grew and grew. It was not without a struggle even that I compelled myself to keep silence respecting your rival; the temptation to inform you, in some private manner, of Richard's infidelity—which I knew would cool your passion for him, and perhaps make you read him aright in other respects—was strong within me; yet I withstood it. I could no longer persuade myself that, in making such a revelation, I should be only actuated by the wish to save and serve you; I knew that "self" would be my object, and I shrank from the baseness of building my future home upon the wreck of Richard's. A circumstance, however, now took place which dissipated all my scruples. Dennis Blake has doubtless told you of it: I allude to my brother's forgery of the thousand-pound bill. I redeemed it, I confess, with the vague intention of holding it over him in *terrore*—of compelling him to leave the town and you; but when I found, from his own lips, that he had made you the innocent instrument of his crime, I swore to myself that you should never wed with such a villain. The letter Richard left behind him was written at my dictation, and under the threat of immediate prosecution: he had no choice but to accept my terms. I gave him a hundred pounds—the last I had in the world—and he left Rosebank, promising that he would never return thither, or claim you for his wife. That very night, within two hours of his departure, he did return—to meet his death."

A mist, not of tears, here fell on Maggie's eyes; her whole frame shook; a noise was in her ears of dreadful blows, and of cries that grew fainter and fainter.

"Mamma, mamma! ook, ook!"—little Willy was

dragging at her skirts, and pointing to his favourite illustration that lay open on the carpet—'look at naughty man!'

She looked mechanically, then turned away with a quick shudder: it was Cain slaying Abel.

ACHIEVEMENTS FOR WAGERS.

THE old magazines are full of gossiping paragraphs relating to achievements performed to decide a wager. Walking feats are among the most numerous of these; generally, an undertaking to cover a certain number of miles in a certain time. In 1772, Foster Powell achieved a work which was much admired at the time: that of walking from London to York, and back, in six days. Those who know the road may feel an interest in tracing him on his journey. He walked from London to Stamford, 88 miles, on the first day; to Doncaster, 72 miles on the second; to York, 37 miles, and 22 miles back to Ferrybridge, on the third; to Grantham, 65 miles, on the fourth; to Eaton, 54 miles, on the fifth; and the final spin of 56 miles on the sixth—making a total of 394 miles between Monday morning and Saturday night, and winning a wager of a hundred guineas.

The reign of George III. was plentifully strewn with such examples. A few years after Powell's achievement above described, and when fifty-three years of age, he performed the wonderful feat of walking 112 miles within 24 hours; he started from Canterbury at 4 A.M., reached London Bridge at 2.50 P.M., and got back to Canterbury at 3.54 A.M.—23 hours 54 minutes. A reputed centenarian, and admittedly a very aged man, undertook to walk 10 miles, on the Hammersmith Road, in 2 hours 30 minutes, for a wager of ten guineas; and he accomplished it in 2 hours 23 minutes. Captain Barclay, a famous pedestrian in the early part of the present century, began his exploits at the early age of fifteen, by walking six miles in an hour, fair toe and heel. His next was to walk from Ury, in Kineardineshire, to Boroughbridge, in Yorkshire, about 300 miles, in five very hot days. He hazarded the large sum of five thousand guineas, that he would walk 90 miles in 20 hours 30 minutes; and he accomplished this arduous task in 19 hours 22 minutes.

Without noticing the walking bouts of the last half-century, which are more likely to have come under the notice of the reader, we will advert to a few in which conditions of a peculiar kind were stipulated, or in which one man failed and another succeeded. Wentworth, an Oxfordshire man, undertook, for a wager, to walk 600 miles in ten days; he broke down; but Head of Knaresborough did it, although greatly distressed. Mullins, a watch-case maker at Shoreditch, wagered that he would walk from Shoreditch Church to St. George's in the Borough, 4 miles, in 50 minutes, barefooted; what was the state of the roads at that time we are not told, but he accomplished the distance in 46 minutes 30 seconds. Macdonald, a tailor, went without shoes or stockings, by preference, doing the greater portion of a walk from Westminster Bridge to Chatham and back; he stipulated for 15 hours, but did it in 14 hours 20 minutes. Captain Barclay and Mr. Wood wagered 600 guineas as to which should go farthest in 24 hours, walk or run as they pleased; Wood had before accomplished 40 miles in 5 hours in this way; but he failed on this occasion, after taking

off and putting on his shoes two or three times; and Barclay had no need to continue the struggle beyond 7 hours. A fish-hawker at Chelsea undertook to run from Hyde Park Corner 7 miles along the Brentford Road, in one hour, with 56 pounds of fish on his head: if he did it, as recorded, in 45 minutes, it doubtless deserved the character given to it of being 'the most extraordinary exploit of the kind that has been performed for many years.' Belonging to this class of exploits, is that which was achieved by a gardener's apprentice, who, for a wager of seven guineas, undertook to walk from Wandsworth to the Borough Market, 6 miles, in one hour, with 300 head of asparagus as a load: he accomplished it in 58 minutes. An exploit of analogous character was that of an orange porter at Thames Street; he made twenty journeys from Botolph Lane to Spitalfields Market, each time carrying 1 cwt. of oranges; the 43 miles he undertook to accomplish in 10 hours, and won a wager of 10 guineas by doing it in 8 hours 35 minutes. The pace for this kind of work is a kind of trot, midway between walking and running. Trotters or runners have sometimes taken a coach-wheel as a companion. Thus, a wheelwright's apprentice, a youth of sixteen, ran a coach-wheel from Blackman Street in the Borough to the three-mile stone at Vauxhall, and back; he undertook, for a wager of 10 guineas, to do it in an hour, and finished his task in 57 minutes. More rapid than this was the work of a man who ran a coach-wheel 8 miles in an hour, with half a minute to spare; but he had a smooth road purposely prepared for him: a wooden platform, a quarter of a mile long, raised a few inches from the ground. We are not sufficiently versed in these matters to know whether the narrative needs correction; but the chroniclers of Charles II.'s time told of a butcher at Croydon who ran from St. Albans to London, about 20 miles, in less than an hour and a half. It is gratifying to learn that he 'ran the last 4 miles so gently, that he seemed to make it rather his recreation than a race.' James Smith, a Falkirk man, undertook for a wager to walk 2 miles backwards in half an hour: if he really did it, as recorded, in 20 minutes, the tendons of his feet must have had no small strain put upon them. A blind man undertook, early in the present century, to run a race with the mail-coach from Halifax to Bradford, a distance of 8 miles; he had 5 minutes start given to him, and came in 12 minutes before the mail, thus beating it by 7 minutes. A bystander expressed a belief that the victor could see; whereupon the blind man offered to have his eyes completely covered with plaster, and thus run the distance on equal terms for a wager—a challenge which was not accepted.

It is to Captain Barclay that pedestrians attribute the introduction of the celebrated feat of walking 1000 miles in 1000 successive hours. To do 24 miles a day for 6 weeks, although a formidable prospect for any beyond a comparatively small number of men, and an impossibility for the majority, would not deter any real pedestrian, seeing that he could have a long and sound sleep every night; but the case is very different when *every* hour in the six weeks, night and day, is to have its distinct mile of walking; since in no case can the men sleep or rest more than about an hour and a half at a time. The feat had been tried several times before, without success; Captain Barclay

accomplished it about 1809. No less than one hundred thousand pounds was staked on the issue. Newmarket was selected as the course; and the walking occupied from June 1 to July 12. He suffered during the ordeal, and had often to be lifted after resting; but his appetite remained good, and he came in victor amidst a vast concourse of spectators. This feat has frequently been performed since. Eaton did 1100 miles in 1100 hours; while other persons have accomplished the still more difficult feat of walking 1000 quarters of a mile in 1000 successive quarters of an hour. More difficult in one respect only, that of having such very short intervals for rest; the total time being of course only one-fourth as long as Barclay's. A pedestrian named Baker did 1000 miles in twenty days, 50 miles a day; to shew his stamina, he accomplished 75 miles on the last day, and 'thrice danced a hornpipe.'

Of course the wagers as to the fleetness of horses are known well enough, seeing that they form the staple commodity at most of our races. Before betting and handicapping, however, became reduced to a system, individual bets of a special kind were made, some relating to saddle-horses, some to the driving of some kind of vehicle. Mr Shafto wagered 1000 guineas against Mr Reynell, that he would produce a person who could ride 29 horses 2900 miles in 29 days, each horse doing a complete 100 miles in a day, and one rider performing the whole; this rider, Mr Woodcock, fulfilled his task. We do not remember what is the greatest distance covered within a given time by the Tatar couriers of Turkey and Persia, such as Mr Frazer described some years ago; but we apprehend that this ride of Mr Woodcock's would have well compared with theirs. What are the notable doings of donkeys in the art of running, we do not know; but there was one instance in which a bet of £100 to £10 was laid that a donkey would go 100 miles in 24 hours: the affair came off at Newmarket, when Neddy not only did his duty, but accomplished it in 21 hours, leaving three good hours to spare.

Special journeys have sometimes been made, involving sea as well as land travel. John Stow tells of one Bernard Calvert, who left London at three o'clock one morning, rode to Dover, sailed in a barge to Calais, and back again to Dover, and thence rode back to London, reaching Shoreditch Church at eight o'clock in the evening of the same day. As the land-riding was 142 miles, and the barge-voyage 42 miles, it is certainly wonderful (if true) that such a journey could have been performed in seventeen hours, with such appliances as were available in the days of James I. Great notice was taken in 1802 of a journey from Paris to London made by Mr Hunter; he completed it in twenty-two hours, the shortest time ever known up to that period; but we incline to think that, all things taken into account, Calvert's work was the more remarkable.

Some of the achievements depending on the incentive of wagers were in past times very odd; and journalists always looked out for such narratives, in times when society had not yet begun to move on, literally and figuratively, at railroad speed. In the early part of the reign of George III. two gentlemen made an eccentric wager at a coffee-house near Temple Bar. One of them undertook to jump into water seven feet

deep, with all his usual clothing on, and undress himself completely. He did it; and if we picture to ourselves the twisting and wriggling involved in such an operation, floating the whole of the time, we must admit it to be as difficult an affair as it was ludicrous. A butcher, on a calm summer's evening, undertook, for a wager, to cross the Thames in his wooden tray. In this exploit, using his hands as paddles, he made the passage safely, from Somerset Stairs to the Surrey side, providing himself with a cork-jacket in case of accident. The chroniclers took care to record that 'seventy boat-loads of spectators were present; and bets to the aggregate amount of more than one thousand guineas depended on the event.' Richard Jenkins, a merchant of York, wagered a large sum that he would pave one hundred square yards with stones in nine hours. He accomplished it; but we are left in the dark as to what kind of paving it was, and in what way the work was performed. A gentleman undertook, for a wager, that he would stand for a whole day on London Bridge, with a tray full of good sterling sovereigns, and would fail to find customers for them at a penny a piece. The report is, that he won the wager, all the passers-by believing that he was merely trying to cheat them with brass imitations. During a visit paid by one of the royal dukes to a victorious ship-of-war at Spithead, a sailor got upon the very top of the mainmast, (the truck), and stood there upon his head, waving his hat round and round on one foot. It is to be hoped that this display of antipodean loyalty was duly appreciated. Heidegger, Master of the Revels to George II. was considered to be the ugliest man in England. A wager was laid that a competitor for this doubtful honour could be found. An old woman from St Giles's was brought forward, and the umpire, with Heidegger's own approval, was about to award the palm to her; but Heidegger, in response to a suggestion, put on the old woman's bonnet, to render the conditions more equal; the additional ugliness was so indescribable, that the victory was awarded to him. Long before the days of steam-boats, a gentleman wagered a thousand guineas that he would make a boat move twenty-five miles an hour. He accomplished it in a very singular way, and at a considerable outlay in money and ingenuity. He caused a circular canal to be dug, 100 feet in diameter, and 9 feet wide, and filled with water; a horizontal pole, equal in length to the radius of the circle, was pivoted at one end to a strong post in the middle, and fastened at the other end to a boat; a horse trotted in a smaller circle, at a point nearer to the post than to the boat, dragging the pole round; and the leverage thus singularly obtained sufficed to give a velocity of twenty-five miles an hour to the outer end of the pole, and consequently to the boat. A baronet and a clergyman laid a wager as to the time when the first Emperor Napoleon would die; but a court of law set aside this bet as illegal, on the ground, that it gave one of the parties an interest in the speedy death of a man much exposed to hazard. We have only space left to notice finally the wager concerning Sir John Throckmorton's suit of clothes, on which a thousand guineas depended. At five o'clock, on a June morning in 1811, two South Down sheep were shorn; the wool was washed, carded, slubbed, roved, spun, and woven; the cloth

was scoured, fulled, tented, raised, sheared, dyed, and dressed; and at half-past six the same evening, the wool which had clad the sheep in the morning was worn as a dress suit by Sir John at his own dinner-table.

ODDS AND ENDS:

FROM DR ROBERT CHAMBERS'S SCRAP-BOOK.

A CHARACTER.—Novelists seem to be drifting into a practice of inventing characters for their fictions, with scarcely any regard to what exists in real life. They give what is purely imaginary, instead of 'holding the mirror up to nature'—the very reverse of the plan pursued by Fielding, Smollett, and Scott. The great thing for a writer of fiction is to look about him, observe living characters, and then fictionise them. As far as I can judge, this is done by Dickens. Everywhere there are curious eccentric people, worthy of being fancifully depicted. One has just died (1843), of whom as much could be made as Lismahago, or Dominie Sampson. He haunted the university for years, and was usually styled Sir Peter Nimmo. Peter was born in a humble rank of life, but with an aspiration for learning, of various kinds of which he acquired a smattering. He was clever, cunning, facetious, and to a certain degree crazy. Beginning life as a schoolmaster, he could not stick to it, and fell into the condition of a parasite, buffoon, and dependent. He would have made a good 'fool,' when court-fools were in fashion. He was portly in figure, had a red good-humoured face, and you would have taken him for a clergyman in decayed circumstances; for his black coat and other garments had a worn and rather shabby appearance. His whole clothing, in fact, consisted of presents of second-hand articles of dress, from his hat to his boots. Labouring under the delusion that he was qualified to be a professor in the university in any department—medicine, divinity, or anything else—he made a kind of effort at presenting himself as a candidate for any chair that fell vacant. Of course, he attended all the classes he had any fancy for, free of charge, the students taking an interest in him, and fostering, while they were amused with, his vanity. The more wealthy among them gave him money to pay for his lodgings; the donations of others being of old clothes and boots. With nearly all, over a long course of years, he was a favourite, and to their kindness he was mainly indebted for his meals. His intimacy with the students did not terminate on their quitting college.

As regards Peter's title of Sir, which he highly prized, as giving him a standing in society, the story runs that he acquired it under the following circumstances: In the course of his peregrinations many years ago, he visited Gosford House in Haddingtonshire, the seat of the Earl of Wemyss, when there happened to be there on a visit a party of young noblemen, including the present Duke of Buccleuch and others. Hearing that Peter had called, the young scions of nobility, bent on the enjoyment of fun, ordered him up to the drawing-room, where he was introduced to the ladies with all due ceremony. On being asked whether he would like a title, Peter at once answered in the affirmative, upon which the Duke of Buccleuch seized a poker, and causing him to

kneel, gave him a hearty thwack over the shoulders, and desired him to rise 'Sir Peter Nimmo.' From henceforth Peter stuck to the title, and the title stuck to him.

During the summer season he generally perambulated the country, calling and 'sorning' upon all the country gentlemen, clergymen, and medical men, who had been what he called 'his class-fellows' at college; and some ludicrous stories are told of his visiting individuals by mistake, who, never having heard of him, did not know very well how to treat a veritable knight, as Peter assumed to be. His dignity, however, was not very exacting; and, provided his creature comforts were liberally attended to, he was quite satisfied to waive all further ceremony.

A story is told of his having once called upon a surgeon in Stirling, who had been one of his 'class-fellows.' The gentleman was from home; but Peter assured the lady that her husband would be very sorry if he went away without an interview, and accordingly he proposed waiting for the doctor's arrival. The lady was quite at a loss what to make of him—his outward appearance so oddly contrasted with his assumption of a title, and his frequently repeated statements that he had just come from a visit to his friend, Sir James —, and was on his way to make a call upon his old college chum, Lord —. She invited him into the parlour, however, and offered him a share of the tea which the family were then in the course of discussing—an offer to which Peter did ample justice, having without much delay disposed of several cupfuls, with bread and butter to match. As night approached, he invited himself to bed, and was shewn to the best and only spare bedroom in the house, having been directed to ring the bell when he wished the servant to remove the light. In an amazing brief space, the servant was summoned to the apartment, when she found Peter seated upright in bed, in the act of undoing the wrists and collar-buttons of his shirt, which he instantly whipped from off his shoulders, and throwing it at the astonished serving-maid, said to her: 'Take away that shirt, and have it clean washed for me to-morrow morning.' The astonishment of the doctor may easily be guessed when, on his return late at night, he was informed of the name of his distinguished visitor! Many equally ludicrous stories are told of Peter's visits; and as he was particularly tenacious of his college friendships, it was no easy matter getting quit of him sometimes.

And so did this strange being contrive to live, until sixty years of age. He was never married. He died in a poor lodging in the Canongate of Edinburgh. On examination of his dwelling there were found bank receipts for nearly £200, a sum which he had saved from the pecuniary donations of friends. His death will leave a blank in university circles.

LACTATION.—Can lactation have any effect in determining the moral character of infants? A friend of mine has a son who, on account of the death of his mother immediately after his birth, was given out to be nursed by a woman in humble life. This woman was afterwards found to be very worthless. The boy, who is now in his sixteenth year, has already been a source of great distress to his father, in consequence of strong traits of

character destitute of probity. He cannot be corrected by any kind of discipline out of a propensity to dissimulation. The strange thing about him is, that no sooner does he commit some gross offence, than he expresses regret for what he has done, promises never to do the like again, and then all at once commits some fresh mischief, to be in turn repented of. As a last resource, he was sent to a school at Brussels; but he ran away from it in disgraceful circumstances, came to London, and entered the army as a private soldier. This, as usual, he said he was sorry for, and wished to be bought off. His father, however, said he would only do so on his rising, by good conduct, to be a corporal. So he went with his regiment to India. [There, as was afterwards learned, he died.] My friend, the father of this unhappy youth, imputes his moral imperfections to lactation. He was, he thinks, vitiated by the milk of his nurse. And he says he is warranted in this notion by having heard of other instances of vitiation of character by similar means. It is worthy of remark that the boy was with his nurse only during the time of lactation.

It does not seem unlikely that a child born of virtuous parents, and partaking of their organisation, may partake of a corrupt element from a milk-nurse. The constitution of the new being in our species is not completed at birth, as it is in some of the lower animals. The lactation is a portion of the process of reproduction. That portion being conducted by a distinct parent of inferior moral character, may be the means of introducing a depravity where, originally, all was morally fair. In other words, we might say that at birth a child is not thoroughly quit of its mother. Nature designs the connection to subsist until the period of milk-nursing is past.

In the *Coltness Collections*, is a passage expressing the sentiments of the wife of Sir James Stewart of Coltness, who was Lord Provost of Edinburgh in 1650. She strictly declined the offer of her husband to have her children sent out to hired wet-nurses, saying 'she should never think her child wholly her own, when another discharged the most part of a mother's duty, and by wrong nourishment to her tender babe might induce wrong habits or noxious diseases.' She added: 'I have often seen children take more a strain of their nurse than their mother.'

A TRAIT IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS.—Adverting to the fact that the Civil War broke out in Scotland, Lord Clarendon remarks that, previously to that time, no news journal devoted a regular place to Scottish intelligence. It is almost the same in the present day. If the London newspapers of a twelvemonth be carefully examined, the small amount of space devoted to affairs north of Yorkshire, while so much is given to matters connected with Ireland, will appear very remarkable. The northern moiety of our island makes no history, as history is ordinarily understood. It is a tax-fertile appanage of the British crown which gives no trouble. This is a circumstance worthy of note, for it seems to say that it is possible for a country to exist in a state approaching to perfect quiescence, if exempt from external sources of annoyance. But it is also worthy of notice, that a country may hardly ask a paragraph a year from history, as history is usually written, and yet

great things may be doing in it. There is a progress in the materials by which a people are supported, and in their ideas, feelings, and manners, which goes on silently from year to year, exciting no particular attention, and yet is more important to it than victories in stricken fields, or struggles for the change of dynasties. And it is in this real but unchronicled history that the northern kingdom is great. On the whole, it is a good sign of the Scotch that they attract so little attention in the London newspapers.

A FLY-FISHER'S SONG.

LET others grudge nor sleep nor toil,
To win ambition's civic crown,
Throughout the land stir up turmoil,
And cast historic heirlooms down;
Swift brooks and soft gray skies for me,
My light fly-rod and liberty!

Some barter, Cæsar-like, their lives,
For plate-heaped boards, batimes grow old,
With jewels yearn to deck their wives,
Coin even conscience into gold:
Meads golden-blossomed please me best,
Flowers mirrored on the stream's calm breast.

I would not change a thankful mind
And simple joys for wealth or name;
Nature's a mother always kind,
Content bring blessings more than fame:
Health, beauty, peace, in ample store
Haunt my trout-stream—who wishes more?

The lark sings 'tirra-lirra' lost—
Spring's blithesome lark—in living blue;
Thrush-carols thrill, vague whistlings tost
Round snow-white hawthorns wake anew,
With magic kisses, sleeping May;
The year's large heart beats quick to-day.

Whose longings are not straightway stirred
In unison with all this glee?
Who starts not like a steed that's heard
Bursts of the pack's full minstrelsy?
To the loved trout-stream swiftly hie,
Trembling shake out the mimic fly!

Throw Plato, Chaucer, far aside,
Unsphere great Homer's soul no more;
Not stately prose, not verse's pride
Can keep me from the pebbly shore;
But Shakspeare, with his 'woodnotes wild,'
Shall ramble with me, nature's child.

Thus dreaming while I fish, the Muse
Befriends sweet labour with her smiles,
Should fortune frown, and trout refuse
The deftly-offered silken wiles;
And brain and hand in concert find
Fresh vigour for the jaded mind.

So here's a noontide health to all
Sworn brethren of the gentle craft,
Much sport and quiet joys befall
Their progress! May kind Zephyr waft
The backles light as random snow
That drops on blue-eyed April's brow.

Then as the sunset lights the west,
And the blind mole his hillock delves,
Let honest anglers seek their rest,
At peace with all men and themselves;
And, tired limbs given to slumber, say:
'Was never spent a happier day!'

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH.
Also sold by all Booksellers.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 517.

SATURDAY, JUNE 20, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

STORY OF LADY JANE DOUGLAS.

IN the year 1700, died James, second Marquis of Douglas, leaving a son, Archibald, and a daughter, Jane. Both were still young. Lady Jane was born in 1698, and was only three years old at the death of her father. Archibald, of course, succeeded as third Marquis. We are to contemplate the brother and sister as being reared in a manner suitable to their birth and the ancient traditions of the family. According to their years, they mingled with the higher Scottish aristocracy; and, to all appearance, there was before them a brilliant future. What might not be expected from the heirs of the House of Douglas! As if Fortune had determined to 'buckle fortune on his back,' Archibald was created Duke of Douglas in 1703. Though a young man, he was now, as we may say, 'at the top of the tree.' There was, however, something perverse, or unfortunate in the fate of the brother and sister. They did not, as one might expect, drop readily into matrimony. The duke grew up a bachelor, and Lady Jane, to the general surprise, refused the offer of the Duke of Buccleugh, a young nobleman of the most agreeable manners. Her ladyship was handsome in person, and remarkably affable, but is said to have been eccentric in her notions. By way of frolic, when twenty-three years of age, she went off on an excursion dressed in men's clothes. One of her weaknesses consisted in making a confidant of a waiting-woman named Helen Hewit, who, though faithful to her throughout, could not be considered a proper adviser or companion to a lady of quality.

Similar in their unmarried condition, the Duke and Lady Jane entertained a mutual and proper regard for each other; and so matters went on for a number of years. How there should have sprung up any change in this brotherly and sisterly affection, is not easy to understand, unless we conceive that her ladyship had given some grave offence by her conduct. At all events, there arose an estrangement, and so far as the duke was concerned, the estrangement ended in positive hatred and ill-

will. A very unpleasant state of affairs this for Lady Jane, who depended entirely on an annuity of three hundred pounds a year granted by her brother, and which was terminable at his pleasure. She cannot be said, however, to have acted discreetly in the circumstances. Perhaps she was bitterly unhappy, and in her unhappiness clung to one she authorised to be her protector. In 1746, at the mature age of forty-eight, with the connivance of Hewit, she secretly eloped with and married Mr John Stewart, a younger brother of Sir George Stewart, Bart. of Grandtully. He had been already married, and was a widower, with a surviving son. What were the recommendations of Mr Stewart, it would be hard to say. He was usually styled Colonel Stewart, but that was only a convenient travelling name. He had no fortune, no profession, nor aptitude for earning a livelihood: just one of those genteel hangers-on who, in virtue of good connections, contrive to live in handsome style by running up bills with tailors, boot-makers, lodging-house keepers, and others disposed to give them credit. Lady Jane was certainly wrong in hurrying into this connection. She was marrying into misery; but is that not done every day from some silly notion of defying friends, and shewing a spirit of independence! The reasons why women marry into obvious and lifelong misery, who might otherwise have passed a tolerably agreeable existence, are past finding out.

The duke was enraged at the elopement and marriage of his sister; for she had let it be understood that she was going away only for a short time for the sake of her health. Leaving His Grace in a state of resentment, we must follow the fortunes of Lady Jane. Quitting her old haunts and acquaintances, she plunged with her husband into a wild round of social and financial difficulties. Their whole resources consisted in the allowance of three hundred pounds a year from the duke, but what was that to maintain the expenditure of persons who never had earned a shilling, and knew little of squaring outlay with a narrowly restricted income? Taking Hewit with them,

they went first to Holland, next they resided for a time at Aix-la-Chapelle, and lastly proceeded to France, where, having remained till 1749, they returned to and took up their residence in London.

Now commences the romance of the story. Lady Jane and Mr Stewart brought with them two male infants, who, they said, were born as twins to them in Paris on the 10th July 1748. Keeping in mind that Lady Jane was in her fifty-first year at the date of the alleged twin-birth, there was something strange in the circumstance; but about it there was no immediate fracas. For what anybody knew, the Duke of Douglas might marry and have a direct heir to his titles and estates. Meanwhile, in a fit of anger, the duke had stopped the annual allowance to Lady Jane, and in London she and her husband were in the direst penury. Coming within the clutch of the law, Stewart was thrown into the King's Bench prison by his creditors. Literally destitute, Lady Jane influenced some friends to apply to government for relief, and a pension was obtained for her of three hundred pounds a year. Nevertheless, whether from sheer mismanagement, or the pressure of clamorous creditors, she was put to great straits, and was on several occasions obliged to pawn her clothes and other trifling effects for bare subsistence. While Mr Stewart was in prison, she lived some time at Chelsea. Her two alleged children were with her; and from the references to them in the letters to and fro between her and her husband, there could only be inferred a genuine parental affection.

Distressed and regretful, Lady Jane bethought herself of endeavouring to move the compassion of her brother. She accordingly went to Scotland in 1752, taking the children and the servant, Hewit, with her, in the hope of effecting a reconciliation. The duke would not so much as see her. Leaving the children in Edinburgh with the servant, she returned to London. Here, while attending on her husband, intelligence arrives of the death of the youngest of the twins, Sholto Thomas Stewart, on the 14th May 1753. Deeply affected, she returns to Edinburgh—a dreary journey of six days and nights in a stage-coach—tries once more to effect a reconciliation with her brother; but all her efforts in this direction are vain. Impoverished, broken down in health, and, we might say, heart-broken, Lady Jane dies among strangers, and is for ever at rest from her troubles. Death clears all scores. The Duke of Douglas had left his sister to die obscurely in a garret. But it was right and proper she should have a funeral befitting her rank and ancestry. She was buried in the Chapel-Royal of Holyrood, November 1753. The dust of Lady Jane mingles with that of nobles and princes.

Archibald Stewart, the elder of the two children, a boy about five years of age, now remained, and was taken in charge by a Lady Schaw, from feelings of humanity; for he was literally destitute. His father, who had never been able to keep himself, got out of his difficulties, by the death of his brother, the baronet, in 1759, when he succeeded to the title, and the estate of Grandtully. After all, there was some good about Stewart, for one of his first acts of administration, on coming into the baronetcy, was to execute a bond of provision for upwards of £2500 for the boy, Archibald, whom he frankly designated as his son by Lady Jane Douglas.

The duke, who disbelieved Lady Jane's story about the birth of the two children, married in 1758. His duchess, a lady of good understanding and amiable disposition, endeavoured to remove his hostility to young Stewart, in whose legitimacy she entertained no doubt, but without effect. To avoid a permanent domestic quarrel, she was forced to remain silent on the subject. The duke did not long survive his marriage. Seized with a mortal distemper, His Grace died in 1761, without issue. By his decease, without direct male heirs, the dukedom was extinct. The marquissate devolved on the young Duke of Hamilton, in virtue of his direct male descent from the first Marquis.

Possessing the power to will away his immense estates, though not his titles, the duke had executed a deed of entail in favour of the heirs whatsoever of the body of his father, James, Marquis of Douglas, with remainder to Lord Douglas Hamilton, brother to the Duke of Hamilton. This entail, or will, if we may call it so, left the law to determine who were the proper heirs. By the public generally, it was thought that the boy Archibald Stewart must necessarily be the heir to the estates of his uncle. It was known that the duke had quarrelled with his sister in consequence of her imprudent runaway marriage, but the legitimacy of her surviving son had not been legally disputed, and it was but reasonable he should enter into possession of the family property. Such in an especial manner was the opinion of the Duchess-Dowager of Douglas, the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry, and other influential personages, a number of whom, acting as guardians of the youth, took care to have him judicially served heir in proper form. To this preliminary measure, an opposition was presented on behalf of the guardians of the Duke of Hamilton. They contested the legitimacy of the youth, and, in fact, alleged that he was a downright impostor. Now began that memorable litigation, the great Douglas Cause, of which we shall try to give some intelligible account.

This extraordinary legal combat began in the superior Scotch court, but it was too important, from the vast interests at stake, and from the feelings that were invoked, not to float, by appeal, to the House of Lords. There was a long contest, in the first place, in the Court of Session, then comprehending fifteen judges, some of them profound jurists, and otherwise noted for their attainments. The case was calculated to puzzle the acutest lawyers, for the evidence was strangely conflicting—in fact, a bundle of contradictions. Unfortunately, the leading persons in the drama had passed away. Lady Jane had died in 1753. Her husband, Sir John Stewart, died in 1764, while the case was in litigation. Unable to be examined judicially, he, a short time before his decease, emitted a solemn declaration, before respectable witnesses, to the effect that Archibald Stewart was his son, by his wife, Lady Jane Douglas.

The principal witness on behalf of the claimant was Mrs Hewit, now well advanced in life. She maintained that Lady Jane was duly delivered of twins on the 10th July 1748. The births took place in the house of Madame le Brun, Faubourg St-Germain, Paris. The professional accoucheur on the occasion was M. Pierre la Marr. Shortly after the births, Lady Jane was removed to a more convenient lodging. When she was

able to travel, she went with her husband to Rheims, taking the elder twin with them, and there the boy was baptised with extraordinary ceremony, and tokens of public rejoicing. The younger infant being weakly, was left in charge of a nurse near Paris. Subsequently, both the children were brought to England by their parents, who treated them always with proper affection. Such, in substance, was Mrs Hewit's account of matters; but, beset and cross-questioned, she contradicted herself in several particulars, and left doubts as to her veracity. Some letters and papers were produced in support of her view of the case, but they were not quite satisfactory. In arguing the case, stress was laid on the circumstance, that although Lady Jane had committed imprudences, she was above being chargeable with wilful fraud and imposition. She might have been giddy and thoughtless, but would not have concocted and deliberately supported a gross falsehood—all which was plausible, but not legally convincing.

The case for the opposition was carefully matured. A law-agent named Andrew Stewart had been despatched to Paris to search minutely into the truth of Hewit's statement. To begin with, he could discover no such person as Madame le Brun. She seemed to be a pure invention. As for M. la Marr, he was dead, all his papers were destroyed, and his widow could give no satisfactory information respecting his professional engagements. Certain letters alleged to have been written by him to Stewart, were, to all appearance, forgeries, or at least had been written at Stewart's suggestion in order to support the fraud. There was a still more perplexing fact. M. Godfroi, keeper of an hotel in Paris, proved by his books, that Lady Jane and her husband lived in his house from the 4th to the 14th July 1748, and that no births had occurred during that period. Next came some remarkable evidence regarding the *enlèvement*, or carrying away of two male infants surreptitiously from Paris. One of the children, taken away in July 1748, was the son of Mignon, a workman in a glass-manufactory. The other child (the younger of the alleged twins) was the son of a person named Sanry, and he was not carried off till early in 1749. It could not be said the children were stolen. Negotiations for acquiring them in the light of a loan or purchase were conducted through a woman who sold books at the door of Notre-Dame, and an Englishman was described as being an active agent in the transaction.

The evidence elicited regarding the *enlèvement* of the two infants is much the most elaborate and curious in the whole of this mysterious affair. That two children had been improperly carried off from their parents at the times specified could not be doubted. The difficulty lay in identifying them with the alleged twins of Lady Jane. As if to prove that the story of the twin-birth was unreal, a lady who had seen the two children together when they were brought to England, declared, from an examination of their mouths, that one was six months older than the other. This, however, was only a matter of belief. On considering the whole state of the case, the Court of Session, on the 15th July 1767, gave its decision. Seven judges were for sustaining the claim of Archibald Stewart, and seven were against doing so. The Lord President also decided against the claim; by which single vote the matter was so far brought adversely to a close.

Claimants of all kinds usually carry the crowd along with them. It was so in the present case. But, besides securing popular favour, the case of the youth, Archibald Stewart, gained the support of many persons of distinction; and, as has been said, the decision of the Scotch Supreme Court was appealed to the House of Lords. The story of Lady Jane Douglas may now be considered as entering on a new phase. The combat is transferred from the Parliament House, Edinburgh, to Westminster, and fresh lawyers step into the arena. We shall speak of one of them—a great man in his day.

Thirty to forty years before the Douglas Cause was heard of, there dwelt in a parsonage in the county of Norfolk, a clergyman named Thurlow. His living was not great. He could just fairly manage to educate his children, and leave them to make their way in the world as they best might. He had a son, Edward, born in 1732. Ned, as he was called, was put to a village school, from which he was advanced to a higher academy at Canterbury, and finally sent as a student to Caius College, Cambridge. In all these moves, he shewed considerable ability, but it was associated with a spirit of idleness and intractability of character which vexed all to whom his education was intrusted. At Cambridge, he so outraged academic discipline, as to be severely reprimanded. Instead of expulsion, he was allowed to remove his name from the roll of students, and go about his business, which he unobtrusively did. Already he had been entered as a student for the bar at the Inner Temple. Thither he went, took chambers, and by fits and starts, read intensely in preparation for what might cast up. To gain a knowledge of law-forms, he went into the office of a solicitor, and there he had for friend and companion, William Cowper, who afterwards signalled himself as a poet. At times, he visited Westminster Hall, to see how remarkable cases were conducted.

Young Thurlow was 'called to the bar' in 1754, but for a time he had little or nothing to do. Any jobs that fell in his way barely sufficed to keep him alive. At length his prospects improved. He got a silk gown; but still continued in chambers, and spent his evenings in social converse at coffee-rooms. One of these resorts which had a peculiar attraction for him was situated near Temple Bar, and kept by a person named Nando. It was a favourite place of meeting for young lawyers. They sat in boxes disputing with each other on any important case before the courts, the side which they respectively took being merely a matter of chance or caprice.

One evening, shortly after notice of appeal had been given in the Douglas Cause, Thurlow was at Nando's. A debate on the subject was got up. He cared nothing as to the merits of the case; but to keep up the discussion, took the part of the appellants on behalf of Archibald Stewart. Learnedly, acutely, he spoke of the cruel injury done to the memory of Lady Jane Douglas. When he set about it in right good-will, Thurlow was a tremendous arguer. He was almost too much for Dr Johnson, who was heard to say, that to encounter Thurlow on any particular subject, he would require a day's preparation. In the case brought under discussion at Nando's, there was that finely balanced amount of contradictions which presented the best possible scope for the

acumen of a young barrister. The subject took Thurlow's fancy, and he went into it with uncommon zest. Analysing Stewart's claim point by point, he conclusively proved its validity, and silenced his opponents.

The argument, conducted with vehemence, attracted listeners. To hear an amusing debate of this kind, provincial solicitors on coming to town on business used to frequent Nando's, and were able to report on the clever young lawyers who had unwittingly shewn off their talents. On the night in question, two solicitors from Edinburgh, who had come to town to prosecute proceedings in the Douglas Cause, were seated next box to that in which Thurlow was holding forth. They were surprised, delighted. Here was the very man they wanted as counsel. Of course, Thurlow knew nothing of their presence, and having said all he had got to say, he paid his reckoning at the bar, and went off to his chambers, thinking no more of the subject. The two Edinburgh agents were not disposed to lose sight of him. They inquired who he was; and next morning, without referring to his gladiatorial exhibition at Nando's, waited on him with a brief and fee as a retainer.

Just as a lucky chance had brought Erskine into notoriety, so was it now with Thurlow. He undertook, and earnestly mastered the case. As a spur to his zeal, he had the support of the Duchess of Queensberry, to whom he was indebted for getting Lord Bute to make him a King's Counsel. The Duchess Catherine—wife of Charles, third Duke of Queensberry—was eccentric in a high degree, bordering on madness. She was the friend of Gay, Pope, and other poets of Queen Anne's reign. Prior, in one of his poems, celebrates her irrepressible temper:

Thus Kitty, beautiful and young,
And wild as colt untamed.

Kitty threw herself with characteristic ardour into the Douglas Cause, vehemently defended Lady Jane's memory, left no stone unturned to make good the claim of young Stewart, whom she represented as a victim of the vilest oppression. Little wonder that Thurlow exerted himself under such inspiration. He saw it would be the making of his fortune, if he could win the cause. It was a hard battle. One of his antagonists was Wedderburn, who at this time had been ten to twelve years at the English bar. The two were well pitted against each other. In his great concluding oration, Thurlow made light of discrepancies in the evidence. Scarcely two historians relate incidents the same way. Few people are able to speak correctly as to dates or places. Memory is weak and treacherous. It was not strange that Mrs Hewit had not remembered everything accurately. There was not the slightest proof that Lady Jane's children could be identified with the two taken away surreptitiously. As for Lady Jane herself, she was an honourable woman, with no selfish purpose to serve by the alleged imposition. Nor were the births of the children when she was in her fifty-first year anything very marvellous. Such, according to a variety of circumstances, occasionally occurred. Then, there was above all, the fact of her parental care and tenderness throughout. She in reality died a martyr for their welfare. And so on Thurlow went in his argument. He

won the cause. On February 27, 1769, the House of Lords adjudged that the appeal be sustained; and that the Interlocutor therein complained of be reversed. In plain terms, Archibald Stewart was declared to be the son of Lady Jane, and heir to the estates of his uncle, the Duke of Douglas.

What exultations over this decision! Public feeling in Scotland seems to have been wound up to as high a pitch of excitement respecting the decision of the House of Lords, as it could have been respecting a great battle deciding the fate of a nation. An advocate on the winning side posted off to carry the news to Edinburgh, where a multitude hailed him with transports of joy, and taking the horses from his carriage, bore him home to his lodgings in triumph.

Becoming thus entitled to the estates, Mr Stewart assumed the surname and arms of Douglas, with the well-known motto, *Jamais arriere* (Never behind). By George III. he was elevated to the peerage, as Baron Douglas of Douglas Castle, 1790. Settling down in his magnificent domain in Lanarkshire, Lord Douglas acquitted himself creditably, and was noted for his spirited and tasteful improvements. Fortune, however, did not destine a lasting inheritance to his family. He was twice married, and at his decease left three sons and several daughters. Each of the sons succeeded in turn as Baron Douglas. All died without issue. On the decease of the third son, fourth Baron Douglas, 1857, his estates were inherited by his eldest sister, Lady Montague, and the title was extinct.

As regards Thurlow, who was so accidentally but intimately concerned in the great Douglas Cause, he rose step by step in his profession by his transcendent abilities; and was appointed Lord Chancellor, and created a peer as Baron Thurlow of Ashfield, 1778. After a long and remarkable career, he died 12th September 1806.

Such, in brief, is the story of the unfortunate Lady Jane Douglas. Looking to the great variety of characters that come upon the stage—the whimsical and unrelenting duke, the misguided and unhappy heroine, the reckless spendthrift husband, the faithful Hewit (a kind of female Caleb Balderstone); the mystery of the twins, the ceremonious baptism of one of them at Rheims, with ringing of bells and scattering of money among the populace; the skirmishing with want in the King's Bench prison; Lady Jane's dreary journey to Scotland, her lonely death, the mockery of a grand funeral, with nodding plumes and copiously draped mutes, the surviving child brought up on charity; the half-mad Kitty, Duchess of Queensberry; Thurlow debating over his punch at Nando's, and finally, with flowing periwig surmounting his bushy eyebrows, delivering his great oration to the Lords, and winning the cause; the overjoyed Scotch advocate dashing in a postchaise up to the Cross of Edinburgh, and frantically shouting triumph to a host of eager listeners—we say, when one thinks of all this, the wonder seems to be that the story of Lady Jane Douglas has not long since been made a subject for the stage. Surely, the dramatic muse never handled a theme so prolific in mysteries, contrasts, lights and shades, hopes and disappointments, delirious joys and the bitterest sorrows—the whole, in a surprising way, in one point of view, turning out satisfactorily at last!

With but a small stretch of imagination, we can fancy what might be the closing scene: Archibald Lord Douglas, at one time a child supported by charity, is seated at a banquet, amidst friends and retainers, in a spacious hall in Bothwell Castle, richly embellished with pictures by Vandyke: The Clyde is flowing majestically under the windows: 'Bothwell Brig' in the distance: Enter peasant-girls bearing gifts of wild-flowers: One of them is invited to sing: The orchestra plays an appropriate symphony: She sings with feeling the plaintive ballad, 'O Bothwell Bank, thou bloomest fair:' Curtain slowly drops: The drama is ended!

W. C.

INCURABLES.

Nor long since we paid a visit to the Hospital for Incurables established on Putney Heath, in a house which was once the residence of the Duke of Sutherland. Glancing at some of the patients strolling about the grounds, and looking at interior arrangements, there seemed to be a generally diffused cheerfulness. Work of all sorts, but especially knitting and crochet, seems to be acceptable to the female patients.

In one of the rooms there is an organ, and it is here that divine service is held on Sundays. The vicar of Putney, or some other clergyman of the Church of England, officiates and preaches in the morning; and in the evening, a service, I believe, is usually conducted by some Nonconformist minister. As a rule, the inmates attend them both—the common doom breaks down all petty sectarian differences; and no privation is so keenly felt among those who are able to come down-stairs at all, as being prevented by illness from attending these services. The movements of the inmates are greatly facilitated by means of a lift in the establishment; so that a patient who cannot move, is taken out of bed, and placed on a couch or reclining chair, and then the chair is moved on to the lift and lowered. Arrived at the bottom, he is wheeled into the room or out on the gravel, and subsequently taken up again in the same way. But all these of whom we have been speaking are the favoured ones. It is on going up-stairs and visiting the patients who are confined to bed, that one realises fully what it is to be incurably afflicted.

'Have you been long confined to bed?' we asked of a pleasant, neatly capped old lady, who was propped up in bed by pillows.

'Seven years, sir,' she replied; but added cheerfully, 'but I do not suffer much, thank God.'

After visiting a few more wards, seven years of bed appeared to us, by comparison, but a moderate confinement. Shortly afterwards, we found ourselves talking to another old woman who had been for no less than five-and-thirty years in bed! Spine disease, coupled with an internal malady, had kept her there. There was no propping up with pillows for her: a rope was suspended from the top of the bed, with a little wooden handle for her to clutch with her hand, and turn herself in bed.

'Five-and-thirty years; but it cannot be long, now, sir; it must soon be over now.' Poor old woman! For many years, she used to receive the visits of a son and daughter there; but now the daughter is dead, and the son is himself struck down by hopeless illness; so the poor old soul is left alone, and consoles herself by thinking that 'it cannot last long now.' The visit of a stranger—especially one of the male sex—to these wards is a pleasant excitement to the inmates: the presence of an outsider appears for a moment to bring them into communication with that great world from which they are so hopelessly cut off.

They love to hear some talk of the things which are being done and spoken of there, and then—poor old souls—it is touching to hear them turn from these to themselves, and pour into the listener's ear a recital of their own sufferings. There are those whose blessed privilege it is to go to such bed-sides as these carrying with them words of comfort and of consolation; but this is not given to all; and it is something for us, rank and file, to know that, even with our little worldly commonplaces, we can divert or cheer these sufferers for a moment. Assuredly, too, there is a lesson for us in the deep gratitude which these poor creatures express for the slightest alleviation of their lot; a deep lesson for us, who fret and grumble at all the little trifling worries which beset us in our everyday life. At the end of the long corridor on the first floor, we came upon the case which impressed us most of all. On a bed placed in the corner of a pretty cheerful room, so as to command a window on each side, a girl, with a beautiful and intelligent face, lay stretched upon her back. A profusion of light-brown hair surrounded her head and covered the pillow—alas! the hair will never be gathered up to adorn that shapely head. From her neck down, she is hopelessly paralysed; not a limb can she move, not a finger can she raise: with her whole body stiffened, as it were, into stone, she has lain there for twelve years, upon her back. Everything that considerate thought can devise has been done to mitigate her lot. Two large looking-glasses are so arranged over her head as to reflect the view from each of the windows, and shew the pleasant Surrey landscape stretching away as far as the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. It is a skilful method of bringing before the eyes of the invalid the green fields and lanes in which she will never walk. A girl yet—she cannot be more than thirty years of age—she has lain there motionless for twelve long weary years. Twelve times she has seen the trees, which stretch their branches up to the very windows, put forth their buds and leaves; she has listened to the birds begin to sing, and known that the pleasant spring-time was at hand. Twelve times she has watched the days gradually lengthen out, and the rays of the sun beat hotter and hotter against her window, until in her mirror she has seen the big glass Palace at Sydenham glancing and sparkling beneath the midsummer sun, and has almost seemed to hear the merry voices of the holiday-makers within it; then slowly the landscape in the mirror has changed from green into an autumn dress of golden brown. Shorter has grown the

daylight, and earlier the shades of night have crept into that little room, which is her world, and now for the twelfth time since she has been lying there, the outside world is white with the snows of winter. Twelve years now; but how many more it will last, God only knows. All that human knowledge can pronounce is, that she will never rise from her back again. She is an incurable. But sad as is her lot, there is not a trace of despondency about this poor young creature; she is cheerfully resigned, and at times there is an air even of subdued and chastened gaiety about her. We conversed with her long, and were quite astonished by the intelligence and interest with which she entered into every subject on which we spoke. Strange as it may seem, this girl, who cannot raise a finger, has taught herself to write, by means of a pencil held between the teeth; she writes on a sheet of paper laid on an invalid's desk stretched across the bed under her chin. Upon hearing us express astonishment at the skill with which she wrote—"Oh, that is nothing," she said laughing; "have you ever seen the woman who paints with her teeth?" We replied in the negative, but stated that we had once seen a man who had no arms painting with his feet, a performance which appeared to our inexperience sufficiently wonderful. "O yes," she replied; "I have heard of him; but it is not nearly so wonderful as the woman I speak of, who painted in oils, and painted beautifully, by holding the brush between her teeth." Her only other amusement besides writing is reading. A book is supported on the same desk in front of her, and by means of a long knitting-needle held between her teeth, she turns over the pages. The process, however, is rather fatiguing, and she prefers being read to: generally, there is some one at hand to do this for her; indeed, there is no lack of kind friends to minister to her in all the little offices—little they are at best—which may at all alleviate her lot. The window-sills of the room are perfect little gardens, covered with hyacinths and ferns and evergreens, and these will in due course be removed by tender hands, and replaced by the earliest flowers of spring. Quitting this bedside, we continued our tour through the other wards.

The male wards present much the same appearance as the female, except that the male patients are in a considerable minority—about one to three. Men are always worse patients than women; but here, even the men are cheerful and contented. An elderly gentleman, blind and paralysed, after a very animated talk with us, related how, on the day before, he had celebrated the fifteenth anniversary of his admission to the hospital. "Yes," exclaimed another man, who was stretched on a wheeled couch unable to move, "and I had come in just a fortnight before." Very touching is the intimacy and friendship which exists between many of these patients, especially between some of those who occupy the same rooms, who have been, perhaps, united for years by a common bond of suffering, and who know that they will still continue to be neighbours until one or other of them shall have been released by death.

Such, then, is a glance at one of the more prominent of the hospitals for the reception of incurables. About the good work it is doing in assuaging the last stages of human suffering, there can, we think, be little doubt; and, looking to the

nature of the institution, we can hardly class it with those charities which seem to create a demand that tends to weaken a wholesome, independent exertion.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—HOW IT HAPPENED.

"Do you still hear me, Maggie, or have I already said so much, that you cannot listen more? Have patience with me, and hear all: it is but fair; for, though Richard be dead, I am dead also. Put yourself in my place, in that hour of triumph, when, as I thought, I had swept Richard from your path for ever; *your* path, I say, not mine, for it was your safety, and not the far-off possibility of my own success with you, that made me happy! He was gone! His power for evil over you was past! He could now never drag you down with the weight of his grossness and his vices! And it was I who had saved you!"

"It was four in the morning, yet I had not gone to bed, but was in the sitting-room, debating with myself what was to be done in the morning; how I should simulate ignorance of my brother's intention to leave home, when I took his letter to your father's house, picturing to myself how you would receive the news—when I heard the front-door open, and his uneven step in the passage. I knew at once that he had seen Dennis Blake and learned all. My having cashed the forged bill was, in effect, an acknowledgment of its authenticity, and had placed Richard out of my power. It seemed to me, who guessed what Fate had in store for me, that the supreme misery of that moment—in which I beheld you once again his slave—could never be surpassed. "So, so, my model brother!" were his first mocking words, "you are not cock of the walk yet, it seems, though you have paid so large a sum for the place!" He had been drinking deeply, and his cheeks were flushed, and his eyes bloodshot. As he staggered up to me, and snapped his fingers insolently in my face, it would have been hard, even for you, to have seen any good looks in him. It was plain enough, doubtless, even to his drunken gaze, that I saw none; for when I answered nothing, he added: "Ah, you are not pleased, it seems, to see me back again, whom you thought to have got rid of so cleverly!"

"I have your promise still," said I.

"My promise! Yes; you have got that, and much good may it do you. You have also your own bill for—a thousand pounds. It's *her* handwriting, man, though it pretends to be yours; *your* name, in *her* handwriting. Why, that must be worth a thousand pounds to you, since you love her so!"

"Why, if I had killed him *then*, woman, if I had struck him down while he was saying such words as those, and killed him, it would not have been murder! I only answered, however: "You are mistaken, Richard. I can produce that bill in court, even yet, though I *have* cashed it, and bring the forgery home to you; and I will!"

"Not you!" answered he contemptuously; "you poor, soft-hearted, love-sick fool, not you! you would never dare to do it! And if you did, who would believe you? Do you suppose that Maggie would go against her faithful Richard—her husband that is to be? ay, and is *soon* to be! You have held your cards a little too low, Brother

John, and I have looked over them. You have wanted her for yourself (as I once told you) all along; but just within these last few hours—come, confess it—you have flattered yourself that you were going to win her. Instead of that, she will be mine—*mine*! Congratulate me! Let us have something to drink her health in. The wine is out; I will go down to the cellar, and get a bottle."

"You have drunk enough," said I, "more than enough; and I have got something to say to you that it is necessary you should understand."

"Something about Maggie, eh?" chuckled he with a vile grin.

"Yes."

"There will be lots of time for that, my good fellow; we will talk of her while we toast her. And in a week or two, when we shall be married and happy—I don't know for how long; it is quite likely I may tire of her: my little Alice is very much to my taste, I own; and then there may be a divorce, perhaps, and you may marry her after all; however—Where was I? I say, when I and Maggie are Darby and Joan together, we will talk of you. If she annoys me, I shall say: 'Why didn't you marry John, you pretty fool? He would have let you have your own way, which, as the case now is, you haven't got.' When conversation languishes, our model John will be quite a topic.—Come, what shall be our liquor? I have had enough, you say, and perhaps I have, of brandy—let it be champagne, then."

"You shall drink no more to-night, Richard."

But he ran by me, before I could stop him, and down the cellar stairs; I snatched up a candle, and followed him to the top of them. He knew his way to every bin blindfold, and had already a champagne bottle in his hand, and was turning to come up again.

"That wine," cried I, "is mine, not yours; and you shall not drink it."

"It was true enough. Half only of what my uncle had left was his, and he had already had three-fourths of everything. I don't rightly know why I was so determined about the wine; whether I really wished to work upon his fears once more, while he was still sober enough to listen to me, or whether my patience had been taxed beyond its powers, and I was fixed to exact my rights at last; but I was resolved that he should drink no more that night.

"Not drink!" cried he contemptuously: "I shall drink what I please, and, what is more, Maggie shall drink also. There is nothing that a woman will not learn of the man she loves; and nothing, if he neglects her, so likely for her to take to as to liquor. How it will shock our model John, our temperance brother-in-law, who had such a high opinion of us—You had best let me pass."

"Not with that wine," cried I. He had tumbled half-way up the stairs by this time, and I had come down a few steps, and stood there barring the way. For all his cold contemptuous talk, I think he had been furious against me all along; and seeing me quite resolved to balk him of his whim, and being passionately scornful of the man who had been his slave so long, and borne so much, he suddenly lost all control of himself. "Take that, then," cried he, and made at me with the bottle.

"I struck out in self-defence—I swear it—with

my fist, and he fell backwards down the steps and on to the cellar floor. So little force had I employed, that the candle in my other hand—the right—was not put out. I ran down the steps to help him; but he was past all help. He had fallen head foremost upon the stones, and never moaned nor moved. *I, his brother, had killed him!* That was my first thought, Maggie; and my second, if that can be called so which was a part of my first, and suggested by it, was, *And I had lost you for ever.*

It would have been the natural course, but for that circumstance (as it was unquestionably the safe and prudent one), to have at once roused our little household, and explained what had occurred. I had done nothing, in the eye of the law, for which I had not, if not a complete defence, at least an ample palliation; moreover, it was the height of rashness to hide the matter, since, if it did come to be known, the concealment of it must needs suggest my guilt. There was apparently no choice between the two courses of action: the one was so safe, the other was so fraught with peril. Yet, for your sake—no! I will be frank here, as elsewhere; it was not for your sake, though the thought of your wretchedness, if this thing should come to be told you, weighed with me too; for my own sake, as respected you, I resolved—it was but a flash of thought, but it shaped my future—to confess nothing, and let matters take their chance. I ran up those fatal steps, locked the cellar-door, and thrust the key underneath it: I hoped to hear it ring upon the stones beneath, but it did not do so; it lodged upon the top step. That little circumstance might, I knew, be fatal to me, for how could Richard have come by his end, with the key *there*? But it was too late to think of that now. By my own act, I had rendered explanation impossible; henceforth, there was nothing for me but duplicity and dissimulation. What mattered *that* (you are perhaps saying), to one who had imbued his hands in his brother's blood? Yet, pity me, pity me a little, Maggie, for you were the innocent cause of all!"

And she did pity him, not a little only, but from the bottom of her faithful heart.

"Mamma not ky," besought little Willie, leaving his pictured treasures to tug at her gown; but the touch of his baby fingers was powerless to help her now: his handsome upturned face and lustrous eyes reminded her of his father, and gave her a new torture. She pitied her husband, and yet she could not forgive him: not by reason of his crime, for she acquitted him of all crime, but because of what had happened afterwards. How could he, *could* he have spoken to her of love, knowing what he had done, and by what means he had been left free to win her!

"I will not harrow up your soul by a description of how I passed that night, waiting for the dawn that was to bring dismay to all, and to one despair. I dented my bed, to make-believe that I had slept in it, but sleep not only then, but for many a night to come, was a stranger to my eyes. If I closed them but for a second, I was once more standing in the cellar, holding the candle above my head, and throwing its feeble rays upon Richard's prostrate form; once more I lifted him up, once more convinced myself that his life had fled for ever!

These spectral fancies faded as the night melted

away, only to give place to as terrible realities. I remained in my room beyond my usual hour, in order that Mrs Morden should find the letter that I had caused Richard to write, and which I had left upon the parlour-table. What moments of agony, remorse, suspense, were those! In the end, I had to find it for myself, to counterfeit surprise at its contents, and even to simulate annoyance and irritation. And here circumstances assisted me greatly, for, without any violation of probability in conduct, I was enabled to cause the cellar-door to be bricked up, thus placing the discovery of Richard's fate at an indefinite distance. Every hour that elapsed after the tidings of his disappearance had once got abroad, placed me on safer ground. I had only to wait long enough, and the mysterious incident would become, I knew, a mere legend, save to two persons—to me and to you. I listened with interest to the ideas and suggestions of others upon the subject, with the view of shaping my own opinions—or, rather, the expression of them—in conformity with theirs. But there was one person only whose suspicions I had the least cause to fear, namely, Dennis Blake. I knew, of course, that Richard had seen him subsequently to our first interview upon that fatal night: it was probable that he had told him of the promise I had exacted from him, and also—when he found that I was powerless to punish him—had expressed his determination not to fulfil it: he had probably even left Blake's house with the avowed intention of returning to Rosebank that very morning, and defying me. In that case, Blake would have good reason, indeed, to disbelieve my story; and so, in fact, it turned out. But, on the other hand, Blake, who had stripped Richard of his last shilling, including the cheque for a hundred pounds I had given him at his departure, had reasons of his own for denying that his friend had visited him on the night in question; while, much as he hated me, it never entered into his mind that I had harmed my brother. It so happened, therefore, that on the only side on which there appeared to be danger, I was made secure. Fortune had thus befriended me in two particulars, but only so far as she may be said to befriend, by gifts of land and gold, a man who has some incurable ulcer, and who would give all he had in the world, and all that he will ever acquire, only to be whole and well. First, I had placed a wall of bricks between my dead brother and the prying eyes of my fellow-creatures; but it was a wall of glass to me, and a hundred times a day I had to look through it: a frightful penance, and, moreover, one which was utterly unavailing to wipe out the sense of my offence. Secondly, accident had silenced my only possible accuser; but there was a voice within me that could not be silenced, and which day and night cried out incessantly against me as a man-slayer who was scheming to stand in his victim's shoes! It lied, for I was not scheming. I had hopes—for how could I have existed without them? or, rather, faint gleams of hope, since it was now apparent that you regarded me with respect—that you might in time accept me for your husband; but I shrank from moving a finger to advance them. When your father fell ill, I assisted him, and strove, secretly, to assist you; but that I would have done, Heaven knows, had my brother been alive, and you his wife. I never breathed a word, nor cast a look—you will bear me witness, Maggie

—that would lead you to imagine the existence of the passion which was devouring me; for I loved you, Maggie, now that I was free to win you, more vehemently than ever; and when Remorse and Shame forgot to gnaw their prey, I was tortured with the flames of vain Desire. It was with no thought of earning your gratitude that I chastised Dennis Blake for slandering you; I struck him down in the heat of passion, as I would have struck down any other man who dared to sully your fair fame. If I had had time to think, I might have held my hand, not because that blow made the only man who had power to harm me my deadly enemy, but because a public quarrel upon your account would, I knew, be the very last thing to recommend me to you. Indeed, when people began to whisper that I had been your champion with interested motives, I felt that it had been fatal to my hopes. From that time I avoided you, and kept at home—great Heaven, what a home it was!—and had you yourself not come to Rosebank, and given me the opportunity of declaring my passion, it would never, I verily believe, have been revealed. Oh, Maggie! how little you thought, as you listened to my pleading, what it was that made my air and looks so strange, and unlike a lover's—what a ghastly obstacle intruded itself between my eyes and your fair face—what a dreadful Something was lying beneath our very feet!

'Pardon me, pardon me, Maggie; think of the wretchedness I suffered then, and afterwards, and (if I live to feel) what I suffer now. It was cruel to you, I own—most cruel; but I thought that you would never know, and you had become the only thing on earth for which I lived.'

CHAPTER XXXIX.—RETRIBUTION.

Had Maggie listened to her dead husband's prayer, and pardoned him, or had she not? Her tears had ceased; his confession lay on her knee unnoticed, and she was staring at the wintry landscape out of doors. Presently, she caught sight of the child, still intent on his book upon the floor, and snatched him up, and placed him on a chair, and the volume on a table before him. Whenever her eyes fell upon the floor, she shivered; yet, she forced them to look upon it, and, after a while, prevailed over her weakness. She sat for many a minute deep in thought, and then, with a long-drawn sigh, resumed her task.

'Well, we were married: the dream of my past existence became a reality to me; and I was happy. You are surprised to read that word; but then you do not know—how should you, who set your affections where you did—what it is to love a being, to possess whom, so far from dissolving an illusion, is a new enchantment. I was so happy, that a new source of disquiet arose within me, a terror lest my happiness should not last—lest the fatal day of discovery (which has since arrived) should dawn, and destroy it for ever! I resolved to neglect no precaution against this peril. Since our honeymoon itself had been spent at home, rumour might be supposed to have exhausted itself respecting my unwillingness to leave Rosebank; and I resolved never to quit it even for a day. That any one in my absence should break down the cellar-wall, was in the highest degree unlikely; but I would run no risks, however small. If you had wished it, indeed, I would have gone

anywhere, since, to have given you pleasure, was a delight I could not have denied myself, no matter at what cost; but, fortunately, you did not wish it. You were content to remain at home, and I was more than content; for, wherever you were, was Paradise! The remembrance of what had happened to Richard had begun to fade even with myself—to recur at longer intervals and with less of force—so that I almost hoped it would be possible in time to forget it; when suddenly you began to talk to me about his disappearance, a subject which had hitherto, as if by common consent, been avoided by us both. Then I felt, indeed, how delusive had been that hope of my forgetting. The mention of my brother's name by the lips that had once avowed your love for him, brought every detail of that fatal act to my recollection, and I beheld it while you spoke. It seemed to have occurred but yesterday, and that the discovery of it might be made to-morrow. Above all, the sense that my brother's whitening bones lay beneath our feet, while I was listening to your talk about him, palsied my tongue, and filled my soul with horror. So intolerable, indeed, were my emotions in that scene and atmosphere, that I was compelled to retire from them, and our conversation—as you remember—was continued in the garden. To my extreme disquiet, I then discovered that you believed Richard to have met his end by foul play, and that your suspicions rested upon Blake. I combated them as stoutly as I could—for who could be so convinced of his innocence as I—and for the better defence of him, endeavoured to convince you that my brother was still alive. This line of argument, however, had an effect natural enough, but which, in my own certainty of his death, I had forgotten to calculate upon: you became intensely solicitous as to his whereabouts and well-being, and insisted upon writing to New York. You read your letter to me in the parlour, and I had to listen there to the gracious words, that I alone, of all men, knew that his eyes would never read; to the questions that I alone, of living men, could answer; and he, all the time, to whom they were addressed, lying so near at hand—so near, and yet so far!

"I almost wonder, when the reply from New York reached us, that my indifference to its arrival did not create the suspicion that I must possess the knowledge that Richard was no more. Of course, I knew that the envelope could contain only your own letter, and something revolted within me against affecting to believe that it could be a communication from the man that I had slain (although by misadventure) with my own hand. However, that incident passed away without any serious effect upon you; indeed, having done your best to pierce the mystery of Richard's disappearance, your solicitude about him seemed to relax, and once more tranquillity began to gather about my life, like mosses about a stone. Indeed, I was even happier than before, for the blessed sense that my devotion was slowly but surely winning its reward from you—a reward it had never counted upon, for all the service of my life was yours, at all events—began to dawn upon me with an inexpressible brightness. I thought, poor fool! that I had been forgiven all, and was henceforth to be blessed always.

"I have said that even yet, when you spoke to me of Richard, I was at once suddenly awakened

from my dreams of happiness, and brought face to face with ruin; imagine, then, my horror when, after weeks of silence concerning him, during which I had well-nigh forgotten that his unburied bones lay beneath our very roof, I was awakened by that noise in the cellar! There is a verse in the Scripture which describes how fear came upon a man who beheld some dread vision of the night—"a trembling which made all his bones to shake: a spirit passed before his face, and the hair of his flesh stood up;" and such was my case when I heard that sound; only, in place of a spirit, I beheld Richard as I had left him, dead. He had been lying with that collar for his grave for more than two years, and now he had risen to denounce me! Such was my terror-stricken thought, when you too, Maggie, were awakened by the noise, and questioned me about it. I had been too terrified to move until you spoke, but the sound of your voice at once inspired me with the courage of desperation. The fear of beholding Richard's ghost was overcome by the greater fear of exciting your suspicions of what made me afraid, which might result in losing you. I resolved, if the noise should come again, that I would force myself to arise and face its cause; but, as it happened, it came no more on that occasion; and in the morning early, I went down, and removed the great picture in the parlour from its nail, and made pretence that it had fallen in the night, and that the noise of its fall was what had disturbed us. The next night, however, we were roused again, and this time a sort of fury seized me, that did not admit of fear, and I arose, and ran out of doors, and looking through the cellar-grating, saw a light, and heard the strokes of a pickaxe; and guessing from whence they came, I went to the woodhouse, and through the subterranean passage, and came upon Dennis Blake at the very moment when he had found my secret out. How he came to discover it, you must needs know by this time, for he has done his worst, I know, whatever that may be; so I need not speak of that. For one single instant, when I beheld him standing in the cellar with the light of the lantern thrown upon my brother's body, and already, as I felt, master of my future life, by whose permission alone I might live on, and at whose word I might be parted from what was dearer far than life, *yourself*, the temptation was strong upon me to become a murderer indeed. He read it in my face, and stood upon his guard with his pickaxe, crying: "One is enough, John Milbank; you shall not kill me, as you have killed your brother." It was a perilous speech for him; but I thought of you, Maggie, who, since you were my wife, must needs be disgraced by any crime of mine, and I let him live, to be my Tyrant. After that, I was not only powerless in his hands, but I had no force even of my own, either without or within. The whole edifice of my life had fallen—from such a height too, for had I not become convinced you loved me!—and was shattered to atoms. Name and fame, present means and future gains, my home and hearth—all lay at this villain's pleasure. Above all, your happiness was in his power, and, by one word of his, could be utterly destroyed. All this, too, had occurred at a moment when I had imagined myself quite secure, as safe from the law, as my conscience was void of the guilt which the law would now impute to me. I saw myself torn

from your arms to the prison, or perhaps even the gallows; at all events, from your arms for ever. Can you wonder, Maggie, that, in the supreme agony of that moment (though I knew it not until you had yourself perceived it), I became an old man before my time—that the winter that had fallen on my heart in its mid-summer, and withered it, turned my hair to snow!

Blake comprehended my position only too well, and pushed his advantage to the uttermost. If I could only have gained time, could have persuaded him to leave the house, and return at daylight, I would have removed Richard's body, buried it elsewhere, and defied him to say his worst of me; but he was too cunning to accede to any such proposal. I told him the whole truth of how my brother had come by his end, just as I have told you, except (you may be sure) that I never breathed your sacred name to him; and I verily believe that I convinced him. But he only shrugged his shoulders, and observed coldly, that whether my brother had been murdered or not, was a matter which in no way affected the terms he was about to dictate to me, as the price of his silence. It might be a satisfaction to my own conscience to believe that the affair had been an accident: perhaps it was so, though he must say the circumstances were very suspicious—so suspicious, indeed, that there was no doubt as to the view which the law would take of the case, if once it should have cognisance of it. It was for our common interest, however, he said, that the matter should be kept secret, and he could keep a secret, if it was made worth his while. Thus he went on as we stood together in the parlour, that dreadful night, while I searched my mind in vain for schemes of safety. He had, in fact, even a stronger hold on me than he supposed. If once I was denounced, even though the law should acquit me, a greater punishment than the worst it could have inflicted would be mine, since I knew you would never more abide with one who had shed Richard's blood. In my utter hopelessness and despair, I even stooped to the humiliation of appealing to the villain's mercy—the mercy of Dennis Blake! Whereupon, he plainly told me that he had no such commodity for any man whose interests were antagonistic to his own, but least of all for me. There was no love lost, said he, between him and any of his fellow-creatures, but that he hated one man worse than all the rest, and that man was John Milbank. When that mark on his forehead—they had told him, in the hospital, he must needs carry it to his grave—was worn out, he might perhaps forgive the hand that caused it, but not till then; so I had best leave mercy out of the question. Then he proceeded to state the price of his silence and of my ransom; of which, let it suffice to say, since he will never profit by it by one farthing, that it was but little short of utter ruin.

During all this time, I had still the thought that he would leave me before daylight, when I might secretly put away the evidence of that seeming crime upon which alone he based his power over me. Cruel, therefore, as his terms were, I professed to accept them, and looked to see him thereupon depart.

"But, my friend, we have not got this down in your handwriting!" said he grimly.

"What matters?" said I. "It is not difficult to

remember what you have left to me, and therefore what you have exacted; and to put such an agreement on paper, though more perilous, would not be more binding than in words."

"That is true; but I was not referring to the agreement at all, which, as you say, is safe enough. What I want is an acknowledgment of the circumstance that has happened to-night—the finding of your brother's body in the cellar, and so on. You may explain how it came there, as you please."

"Then my heart sank within me indeed, for what he demanded was, in fact, nothing less than a confession; and, if once possessed of that, he was my master indeed, for ever! Then suddenly a thought, which at the time seemed to have winged its way from Heaven itself, flashed on my brain. In obedience to his request, I got out some paper from my desk, but contrived (and my agitation and excitement must have rendered the accident natural enough) to upset the ink.

"You must have ink elsewhere," said he sternly.

"Yes," said I, "there is some up-stairs: I will fetch it."

"I resolved to write out what he required in the ink invented by your father, and trust to its virtues to make me once more a free man. I came up to your room, as you remember, and you gave me a bottle. What you must have thought of such a demand, at such a time, I cannot guess; my whole mind was intent on getting that villain from under our roof, and, meanwhile, could apply itself to nothing else. I wrote out what he wanted; and when he had read it over carefully, he nodded approval, and put it in his pocket. He asked me for fifty pounds—just as one asks the banker with whom one has a balance to cash a cheque—and saying that that would do for the next ten days, when he would call again, and when I must be ready with a good lump sum, he left me."

AN OLD ENGLISH TRAVELLER.

In the early part of the seventeenth century there was an Englishman, named Fynes Moryson, who had a passion for travelling, and has left an account of *Ten Years of Travel through Great Britain and other Parts of Europe*, 1617. Moryson's book, a bulky folio, is now as scarce as it is curious. Few know anything about it.

He begins by telling us of his experiences as a traveller in Bohemia. Then, he goes off in a visit to Jerusalem and Constantinople. At this point, we are reminded of a strange custom adopted by the younger sons of good houses, about the time of Queen Elizabeth, to increase their slender patrimony. Travelling with them was a kind of lottery. Before leaving the country, they would deposit in the hands of some speculator a sum of money, which was to be doubled, trebled, or in some degree proportionately increased, according to the dangers or difficulties attending their task, in the event of their safe return. Their journey was a kind of wager. Moryson found, when he came back from his first expedition, that his brother Henry was about to start on a voyage, having for that purpose put out four hundred pounds, to be repaid twelve hundred pounds, should he not die on the journey. In spite of his observation, that these kind of adventures were grown very frequent, whereof some were indecent, some ridiculous, and

that they were in great part undertaken by bankrupts and men of base condition; Moryson shewed no reluctance to accompany his brother, and, he says, gave only one hundred pounds, to receive three hundred pounds at his return, among his brethren and friends; and a hundred pounds to five friends, on condition they should have it if he died, or, after three years, should give him one hundred and fifty pounds if he returned. The speculation, from a pecuniary point of view, proved a bad one. The great expenses of the journey, his brother's death, of his own sickness, were far from being defrayed by the money to which he was entitled on his return; and, of course, the four hundred pounds put out by his brother were forfeited.

In the year 1600, Moryson went to Ireland as secretary to Mountjoy, Lord-deputy. Of the person, apparel, diet, manners, and other particulars of his patron, he gives a graphic account, and we cannot resist the temptation of straying a little from the purpose of this article by giving a portion of it here. Before Mountjoy went to Ireland, Moryson tells us his usual breakfast was panada and broth; but during the war (against Tyrone), he contented himself with a dry crust of bread, with butter and sage in the spring-time, washed down with a cup of stale beer, sometimes mixed with sugar and nutmeg. At dinner and supper he had the choicest and most nourishing meats and the best wines. He indulged in tobacco abundantly; and to this practice our author ascribes his good health while among the bogs of Ireland, and the relief of the violent headaches which regularly attacked him, like an ague, for many years, every three months. 'He delighted in study, in gardens, a house richly furnished, and delectable for rooms of retreat, in riding on a pad to take the air, in playing shovel-board, or at cards, in reading play-books, and especially in fishing and fish-ponds, seldom using any other exercise, and using these rightly as pastimes, only for a short and convenient time, and with great variety of change from one to the other.' Particular delight did Mountjoy take in the study of divinity, and especially in reading the Fathers and Schoolmen; some chapters of the Bible were each night read to him, and he never omitted prayers at morning and night.

With such touches as the above, does Moryson portray to us the character of a Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

At the time Moryson travelled, he informs us, fifty or sixty pounds yearly sufficed to bear the charge of his diet, apparel, and two journeys yearly in the spring and autumn; such as have servants to attend them must reckon upon each one spending as much for their diet as the masters do, 'especially in Germany, where passengers of all sorts sit at the same table, and pay the like shot.' Germany, indeed, is the country into which he recommends all Englishmen first to pass. 'We use,' says he, 'too much the help of our servants, and despise the company of mean people; there we may learn to serve ourselves, as he that enters a shoemaker's shop must find out the shoes that will fit him, and put them on himself; there we may learn to feed on homely meat, and to lie in a poor bed. All strangers in Germany,' he concludes, 'are free among that honest people from all cozenages and deceits, to which they are subject in other parts.'

We have no space, however, to follow our traveller through the many countries of Europe which he visited, rich and instructive as are the particulars with which he furnishes us. Still more interesting are the observations he has to make on England itself, every part of which would appear to have been thoroughly explored by him. First, we will take a little paragraph relating to the proverbial speeches of the country. 'Loudoners,' he says, 'and all within the sound of Bow-bell, are in reproach called Cockneys. The Kentish men were of old said to have tails, because trafficking in the Low Countries, they never gave full payments of what they did owe. Essex men are called calves (because they abound there); Lancashire men, egg-pies, and to be won by an apple with a red side. Norfolk wiles (for crafty litigiousness), Essex stiles (so many as make walking tedious), Kentish miles (of the length), Lincolnshire bells and bagpipes, Devonshire white-pots, Tewkesbury mustard, Banbury cakes, King's-Norton cheese, Sheffield knives, Derby ale, are proverbially spoken of.' From his description of the counties, it appears that several of them differed then, in many particulars, very much from their present characteristics. Cornwall had then such abundance of corn, that large quantities were annually exported thence to Spain. On the other hand, in no part of England did the ground require more expense than in Devonshire, 'for in many places it is barren, till it be fatted with the ooze or sand of the sea, which makes it wonderfully fruitful.' Bristol he represents as next to London and York, being preferred to all other cities of England, on account of its fair buildings, and its public and private houses. Malmesbury was at this time celebrated for its woollen cloths; Wakefield, too, was famous for the same manufacture; Rye, in Sussex, as the most frequented passage into France. 'The town of Rounney, one of the five ports, in our grandfathers' time, lay close upon the sea, but now is almost two miles distant from the same.' The town of Stony Stratford is well known for its fair inns and stately bridge of stone. The little city of Westminster, of old more than a mile distant from London, is now, by fair buildings, joined to it. The city of London hath the sumptuous church of St Paul, beautified with rich sepulchres, and the Bourse, or Exchange, built for the meeting of merchants; a very sumptuous and wonderful bridge built over the Thames; rich shops of goldsmiths in Cheap-side, and innumerable stately palaces, of which a great part lay scattered in unfrequented lanes. Lynn, in Norfolk, is represented as famous for the safety of its haven, most easy to be entered, for the concourse of merchants, and the fair buildings. Cambridgeshire is famous for its barley, 'of which, steeped till it spring again, they make great quantity of malt, to brew beer, in great quantity, as the beer is much exported into foreign parts, and there highly esteemed.' The ale of Derby was, for goodness, proverbially preferred before that kind of drink in any other town. Coventry, Moryson declares, is the fairest city within land, of which the chief trade had been the making round woollen caps, but these being, at the time he wrote, very little used, the trade was decayed. Coals and veins of iron were to be found in South Staffordshire; but the greatest quantity and best kind of coal was in Nottinghamshire. No other county

had so many knights' houses as Cheshire; 'it is rich in pastures, and sends great quantities of cheeses to London.' 'Manchester is an old town, fair and well inhabited, rich in the trade of making woollen cloth, and the cloths called Manchester cottons are vulgarly known.' These cottons, however, were in fact woollen goods, as the manufacture of real cotton goods was not begun until about half a century later.

Moryson had evidently a wide experience of the inns and houses of entertainment in all parts of England and Scotland, and writes of them with much minuteness of detail and quaintness of illustration. 'There is no place in the world,' says he, 'where passengers may so freely command as in the English inns. They are attended for themselves and their horses as well as if they were at home, and perhaps better, each servant being ready at call, in hope of a small reward in the morning.' In no other country did he see the inns so well furnished with household stuff.

As soon as a passenger comes to an inn, we are told, the servants run to him; one takes his horse, and walks him about till he be cool, then rubs him down, and gives him meat; another servant shows the passenger his private chamber, and kindles his fire; the third, pulls off his boots, and makes them clean. Then the host and hostess visit him; and if he will eat with the host, or at a common table with the others, his meal will cost him sixpence, or in some places fourpence; but if he will eat in his chamber—for which superior accommodation a charge of something like two shillings is made—he commands what meat he will, according to his appetite. The kitchen is open to him, to order the meat to be dressed as he likes best. After having eaten what he pleases, he may with credit set by a part for next day's breakfast. His bill will then be written for him, and should he object to any charge, the host is ready to alter it.

In Scotland, they had no such inns as were in England, but in all places some houses were known where passengers might have meat and lodging; but they have no 'bushes' or signs hung out [this is not quite correct]; and as for the horses, they were generally set up in stables, in some 'out-lane,' not in the same house where 'the passenger lay.' 'If any man be acquainted with a townsman, he will go freely to his house, for most of them will entertain a stranger for his money.'

On the subject of coaches, horses, and the other different modes of conveyance, Moryson speaks with equal authority. Sixty years ago, he tells us, coaches were very rare in England; but in his day, pride was so far increased, that there were few gentlemen of any account (meaning 'elder brothers,' as he parenthetically explains) who had not their coaches; so that the streets of London were almost stopped up with them. We may here remark, that we have ample evidence, from other sources, of the annoyances caused to the ordinary dwellers in London by the great amount of coach-traffic through the narrow thoroughfares, and many methods were suggested of abating the nuisance. In 1619, a tax of forty pounds a year (which is equivalent to two hundred pounds, at least, of our present currency) was proposed to be levied on all persons below a certain degree who kept a coach; and in January 1635-36 King Charles

found it necessary to issue a proclamation 'for restraint of the multitude and promiscuous use of coaches about London and Westminster.' From the terms of this, we gather, that of late times the great numbers of hackney-coaches in London and Westminster, and the general use of coaches therein, had grown to a great disturbance to the king, queen, the nobility, and others of place and degree, in their passage through the streets; the streets also were so 'pestered,' and the pavement so broken up, that the common passage was hindered and made dangerous; and the prices of hay and provender made exceedingly dear. His Majesty therefore commanded that no hackney-coach should be used, except to travel three miles out of London, and that no person should go in a coach in the streets of London except he kept four horses for His Majesty's service whenever his occasions should require.

For the most part, continues Moryson, Englishmen, especially in long journeys, used to ride upon their own horses; for hired horses, two shillings was paid for the first day, and eighteenpence for each succeeding day that he was required by the traveller. Lastly, the carriers had long covered wagons, in which they carried passengers from city to city; but this kind of journeying is described by our author as so tedious, that none but women and people of inferior condition, or strangers (among whom he particularly instances the Flemings, their wives and servants), avail themselves of it.

We have only space enough left for Moryson's account of the mode of living and manners of the Scotch. At the house of a knight where he staid, he writes, there were many servants in attendance, who brought in the meat with their heads covered with blue caps; the table being more than half-furnished with great platters of porridge, each having a little piece of 'sodden' meat. When the table was served, the servants also sat down at it; but the upper mess, instead of porridge, had a pullet, with some prunes in the broth. And he observed 'no art of cookery, or furniture of household stuff,' but rather rude neglect of both; though himself and his companion—sent from the governor of Berwick about Border affairs—were entertained after their best manner. The Scotch were then living in factions, and used to keep many followers, thus consuming their 'revenue of victuals,' and living in some want of money. They commonly ate hearth-cakes of oats, but in cities had also wheaten bread, which for the most part was bought by courtiers, gentlemen, and the best sort of citizens. When he lived at Berwick, the Scotch used weekly, on the market-day, to obtain leave from the governor to buy pease and beans, of which, as also of wheat, the merchants sent great quantities from London into Scotland.

Pure wine was the favourite Scotch drink, not mixed with sugar, after the English fashion; though, at feasts, they put comfits to it, like the French. The better sort of citizens brewed ale, their usual drink (which, says the writer, will distemper a stranger's body), and the same citizens will entertain travellers upon acquaintance, or entreaty. Their bedsteads were then like cupboards in the wall, with doors to be opened and shut at pleasure, so that they had to climb into their beds. When travellers went to bed, it was

the custom to present them with a sleeping-cup of wine at parting. The country-people and merchants used to drink largely, the gentlemen somewhat more sparingly; yet the very courtiers, at feasts, by night-meetings, and entertaining any stranger, used to drink healths not without excess, and (to speak truth without offence, interposes Moryson) the excess of drinking was then far greater among the Scotch than the English—a fact which, looking at the consumption of liquors in the present day, does not excite any surprise.

ACROSS THE SANDS.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

SWIFT of foot and strong of will, nerved, too, by the thought of Aline's peril, Margaret flew rather than walked on her way to Stourchester. The hollow roar of the sea, nearer than before, which told that the tide had turned; the scream of the sea-birds; the boding shriek of the wind, that freshened fast; the sable blackness of the clouds, that hung like a giant's pall above the measureless waters—all seemed indifferent to her. Aline was ill—dying, perhaps—and her life might hang upon a question of minutes. Just as Margaret left the sands, to ascend by the hollow road, between high banks, that led up into Stourchester, the storm broke, and the heavy rain—she had left her cloak, where she had dropped it, beside the couch of her sick sister—chilled and wetted her, but she scarcely felt it as she pushed steadily on. How impatiently did she wait while careful little bald-headed Mr Cooper, who had served half the county with drugs for the better part of a century, settled his gold-rimmed spectacles to read the prescription and to verify the autograph. And when the chief assistant was demurely busy in the preparation, adding one ingredient to another, plying the pestle, filtering, compounding, what agony it was to Margaret to linger there—for hours, as it seemed, listening to the slow ticking of the methodical clock below the bust of Jenner, and with all her thoughts, her very heart, far away across the Stour, at the side of Aline's bed of pain.

'You'll go round by the road, miss, of course,' said the old chemist, as he put the little packet into her hands; 'no one would think of risking the short cut by the river, now.'

Margaret muttered something inarticulate, and hurried out. The black clouds were flying fast overhead. It was almost dark. A dull roar, as of wind and sea in unison, was audible even in the streets of Stourchester. Few people were to be seen in the streets, the very stones of which shone as the sheets of rain beat on wall and pavement. What was that? The first red flash of lightning, followed, after a pause, by a long and hollow roll of distant thunder. Margaret stopped, and for an instant hesitated. Close by, across the street, was the well-known yard of the principal livery-stable keeper of the place. If she could get a carriage there, no time need be lost, and she need not face the passage by the sands.

'Can I have a fly at once—or a carriage of any sort?' she asked hastily.

'Very sorry, miss,' said the man, who knew her; 'but we have nothing in. All our carriages have been bespoke—some for the Odd-Fellows' fête; some for the picnic at Sir John's, over at Cloverley.

If you could wait for half an hour, or, maybe, three-quarters'—

Impossible! She could not wait; and so, without further attempts to proceed by the safe but circuitous route of Battle Bridge, she hurried through the street, struck into the hollow way that led to the sands, and pushed on, resolutely, through the blinding rain and gathering gale.

Meanwhile, it was an anxious time for the watchers beside Aline's couch of sickness, as they listened to the shriek of the wind as it whistled among the boughs of the swaying poplars without, and to the sullen moan of the rising sea. Presently, the rain began to beat, thick and heavy, against the walls and windows of the cottage, and then the ominous growl of the far-off thunder added its menace to the already threatening voice of the impending storm.

'Won't she stop in Stourchester—or go round by the Bridge, anyhow?' asked the fisherman's widow, shading her eyes with her wrinkled hand, as a brighter flash lit up the gloom of the fast deepening twilight.

'Not she!' returned Nanny decisively. 'She never seems to know what fear is, and where Miss Aline's concerned, I believe she would go through fire itself. The tide must be on the turn by now.'

'The wind blows harder and harder. The sea will run in, to-night, like a mill-race,' said the other woman; 'Lord have mercy on Miss Margaret, if she's out on the sands then.'

There was a long and painful silence. It was broken by the fisherman's widow, who had drawn near to the open window, through which the rain was driving fiercely.

'Twas just such a night as this—you mind it, Nanny; we were young ourselves, then, both of us—when Sam King and Will Atkinson, and two other young chaps, that had been over at Stourchester Fair, tried to cross. They were fisher-lads, and knew the coast; and they'd never have done it but for the drink, that made them fool-hardy, and the jeering and flouting, and daring them to shew their mettle, of some of the public-house company. I remember that two of them were found in the stake-nets, next day, entangled among the meshes, just about low-water mark—but poor Sam and Will were never seen dead or alive—it was thought the bodies were washed out too far to sea ever to touch beach again. Hearken! how the waves are getting up, beyond the Point. 'Twas a sin, Nanny, not to stop that poor girl from going to her death; we ought to have held her back by force, if need was.'

'How could I?' said Nanny disconsolately. 'She's that quick, she was gone like the blink of an eye; and, besides, Jenny, she is not one to be easily hindered when she's set upon a thing. I shouldn't care to thwart her where this poor young thing'—pointing to Aline's passive figure—'was in question.—But who's this at the door?'

It was a man's step, firm and rapid, that crushed the gravel of the narrow garden-path, and a man's hand that pulled the door-bell with unaccustomed force.

'Is Miss Margaret—is Miss Gray, I mean, at home?' asked the new-comer, in a clear, strong voice, that had something very pleasant in the ring of it. 'If so, please to say.'

But Nanny put her apron to her eyes, and began to sob aloud.

'Why, what is all this?' asked the applicant for admission, with a sudden tremor in the rich voice that had sounded so bold and joyous but an instant before. 'Nothing wrong? No one ill here, or— Speak! can't you, and let me know the truth.'

'It is Miss Aline, the younger of the two, that's ill,' answered Nanny, half frightened at the vehemence of the questioner, who now drew a deep breath, as if relieved of a cruel apprehension.

'Yes, poor thing, she was always delicate,' he said. 'It is nothing serious, I hope. I am sorry I made so much noise in arriving. Perhaps you would tell Miss Margaret, who is with her sister, of course, that a friend from abroad—or, better, say that Mr Darrell—Frank Darrell'—

But his speech was interrupted by a fresh outburst of sobs, in which, from sympathy, Nanny's friend and fellow-watcher, whose sun-browned face now appeared in the passage, as she came forth, candle in hand, joined her. Servants often know a great deal more of the antecedents and the inner life of their employers than the latter would deem possible, and Nanny, who was both warm-hearted and inquisitive, was familiar enough with the name of the young sailor, who was supposed to have been lost at sea. She wrung her withered hands in genuine distress.

'God, be good to her, poor dear young lady,' broke out the old woman passionately. 'It does seem hard, just when she would have been so happy!—You are Miss Margaret's sweetheart, sir, are you not?'

'Yes; and I have come back to claim her as my wife,' answered the visitor hastily. 'But, tell me, good woman, what is wrong—with *her*, I mean. Your hints torture me.'

It was old Jenny Brooks, the fisherman's widow, whose husky voice replied: 'She has gone across the sands, gone to Stourchester, sir, to fetch some doctor's stuff, that Dr Smith ordered for her young sister, lying speechless in a swoon, in the parlour here; and the tide is coming in, and the storm coming on, and'—

The visitor staggered as if he had received a blow, and leaned against the doorpost for support. Twice he tried to speak, but his voice failed him, and he stood staring stupidly at the two women, as if he hardly knew the meaning of the evil tidings that had greeted him. A handsome, manly young fellow he was, with brown hair that curled crisply around a broad forehead, somewhat bronzed by the hot sun of the tropics, and a mouth and eyes that expressed at once gay good-humour and determination not readily to be shaken. He was pale enough now, however, to warrant the compassionate looks of Nanny and her friend, as the former whispered: 'You should have broken the news to him a bit. He takes it to heart, poor fellow.'

But Frank Darrell, the anguish of that moment once over, soon regained the presence of mind that was due to habitual familiarity with danger.

'Never mind me!' said the young man hoarsely; 'time is precious; so answer me straight to the point, my good soul. Has the tide turned yet? And which is the road to the sands? One thing more—who in the village has a boat ready to put to sea at five minutes' notice? It is work that would be well paid.'

'My husband's cousin, Jasper Venn, has his

coble beached this side of the headland, ready for launching, and his sons are at home,' answered Widow Brooks. 'But I am not sure, in this dirty weather'—

'Leave that to me!' said Frank impatiently; 'only guide me to his house, and then shew me the shortest way to reach the sands.'

'The sands!' returned Nanny, aghast; 'why, it would be throwing away another life, Mr Darrell, to venture on them now. By this time, the tide is in the Stour, and the stepping-stones'—

'Nonsense! I can wade, or, if need be, swim,' answered young Darrell, whose spirits began to rise at the very notion of personal peril. 'I suppose the town-lights will be beacon enough, once I am on the shore, to guide me along the path to Stourchester, and I shall meet her between the river and the opposite bank. Come, then.—Mercy, what is that!'

And indeed the exclamation was natural enough, for there, in the passage, stood Aline, wan and haggard as a ghost, with her hair streaming over her shoulders, but restored, as if by a miracle, from that death-in-life that had held her in its gripe.

'I know you, Frank Darrell!' she cried out breathlessly, as the women set up a shriek, as if they had beheld the very dead to rise again among the living; 'I know you will save her—my treasure—my darling—save her for me, for yourself. See! I am strong and well, and I will come too, and'—

'Hush, hush! Miss Aline; you must not stir one step, on such a night,' said Darrell, as he gently led back the excited girl to the sofa, on which, the first wild impulse to exertion spent, she dropped helplessly. 'I must not lose time. I will bring Margaret back—bring her safe and well, or you shall never see Frank Darrell more.' And leaving her in Nanny's care, he hurried, guided by Widow Brooks, towards the hut, built of old ships' timbers, calked and coated with tar, in which her cousin Jasper dwelt.

'Can you get your coble afloat, the instant the tide serves, to save life on the sands? It's a wild night; I know that—I am a sailor too—but a good boat and stout hearts can weather it. Ten guineas—ay, or twenty, for your work; but to a true seafaring man, and a Christian, the money is a less reward than the saving a fellow-creature from drowning.'

The men looked at one another. The howl of the rising wind and the roar of the surf were very audible, even within doors. The women began to talk, in complaining accents, of the threatening weather. It was more than gold was worth, one of them said, weeping, to put to sea at such a time.

'There are things better than gold, though,' said Frank Darrell promptly; 'and, till I see it with my own eyes, I'll never believe that English sailors will sit in cowardly security in the chimney-corner, and let a girl drown, within, perhaps, a cable's length of their door; ay, or that Englishwomen would hold Englishmen back in such a cause. Come; I risk more than I ask of you. I shall go down alone, this instant, to the sands, to save the woman I love, or to die with her. Out with the boat, men! you'll never repent the good deed.'

Five minutes later, and the coble, dragged down by the main force of sturdy arms, came grating through the shingle of the pebbly beach, ready to be launched, so soon as the white waves, now very

near, should afford depth of water sufficient for her to float in. But already Frank Darrell was on the sands, and fording the channels of the Stour, where already the water was deepening, as the first influx of the tide forced back the current. There was not light enough for the young man to distinguish the stepping-stones, now completely submerged; but he was active and strong, and waded his way across without much difficulty. Once on the firm sand beyond the river, he looked up at Stourchester town, the lights of which were to be his guide. The gale blew fiercer, and fresher than before, and the hollow roar of the sea drew nearer and nearer.

'To save her, or to die with her!' he muttered as he bent his head and hurried on—'the last, I fear, is the most likely.' And he doubled his speed as he rushed on.

It was when the first half of her difficult journey across the sands had been performed, that Margaret Gray, as she paused to take breath and snatch an instant's repose from toil, realised the peril of her task. She was strong in her youth and health—strong, also, in her unselfish courage, and the deep love for her suffering young sister which had prompted her to run a risk so fearful; but now she began for the first time to fear that her decision had been unwise, and that she had rashly taken on herself more than she could accomplish. All the old histories of lives lost, by carelessness or misfortune, on those fatal sands, crowded on her memory at once, and with a force which they had never had before. She was well used to traverse the wide estuary of the Stour by daylight, and in moderately calm weather; but now, buffeted by the gale, drenched by the furious rain and driving spray, and hearkening to the increasing noise of the surf as it broke beyond the headlands, she felt her heart beating wildly, and acknowledged to herself that she had done wrong. Behind her was the lighted town of Stourchester; but to retrace her steps would now be almost as dangerous as to proceed. In front, a solitary gleam from the window of an upland farm was all she had to guide her, as she pushed on, desperately, towards the Stour. Louder and louder grew the tumult of the wind and sea.

It was not long before Margaret, with dismay, recognised the presence of a new peril. The sand, commonly so firm, was now palpably quickening, to use the local term, beneath her tread. Her progress became slower and more laborious as her feet repeatedly sank below the soft and spongy surface. Often, too, when she trod on the footprints which wayfarers had left behind them that day, she found them already filled with water that oozed from below; and more than once she had to splash and struggle through shallow pools, where no such pools had been when last she crossed the estuary. Her strength was nearly spent, but still she pushed bravely on, fighting every inch of her way against the driving gale. Almost mechanically, she held fast the little packet that contained the precious drug which was to restore Aline to health. Poor Aline, what would become of her, if she were doomed, that night, to undergo a second bereavement, that should leave her, forlorn indeed, at the mercy of the cruel world! The thought of her sister's absolute dependence on her, nerved Margaret to fresh exertions, and, though greatly

fatigued, she struggled on. But now the thunder, which had been of late less frequent, added its formidable voice to that of the raging wind, and the lurid gleam of the lightning came again and again to illumine the waste. What was that, coming on, fleecy white, advancing rapidly, and covering the yellow sands as with a spotless shroud? Not the sea, surely. Another flash! The low white foam-line is nearer now, hurrying, stealing on; and behind it, far away, is something like a snowy wall, rolling pitilessly on, pushed forward, as it seemed, by the tumultuous blackness that followed close behind. Then Margaret knew that the worst had come to pass. It was impossible now to reach the Stour. The tide was in upon her, and she was lost!

Another blinding flash, and yet another! and while still dazzled by the lightning, Margaret felt a sudden chill as something white reached her feet, passed her by, and sped on, far up the estuary, and she was actually standing in the shallow water that had now overspread the sands, and which was deepening as fresh foam-lines rolled in, while the tumbling wall of surf came on, as if hungry for prey. She had no hope to be heard, no chance of rescue, yet instinctively she set up one long despairing cry for succour. No answer! save from howling wind and seething sea, that seemed to mock her idle appeal for aid. Yet once again she cried aloud, and this time the call was answered, as, splashing through the knee-deep water, a man's dark figure became visible. In the next instant he was beside her. It was Frank Darrell, who hurriedly expressed his delight at finding her. There was no time to lose.

And as he spoke, he lifted her in his powerful arms as easily as if she had been a child, and waded vigorously onwards. For a moment, Margaret, dizzy with the shock of this unexpected meeting with one whom she had secretly mourned as dead or faithless, was, as it were, insensible to fear. She seemed safe, with those strong arms around her, with drooping her head on the shoulder of the man whom she loved so dearly, and it was only the roar of the approaching sea that roused her from her sense of blissful security.

By this time Frank had gained, with some toil, the vantage-ground which he desired to reach. By the light of the red flashes, his quick eye had espied a broken post or stake of stout timber, green with sea-weed, that protruded from the surface of a sloping sand-mound, and around which lay several heavy stones. Here, with his back to the weather-beaten scrap of woodwork, he could rest and take breath, while eagerly scanning, at each recurrent flash, the wilderness of waters before him.

'All depends on Venn and his coble,' he said aloud; and then, exerting his voice to its full strength, he hailed the as yet unseen boat. 'The lubbers have had time, surely, to get their cockle-shell thus far!' he muttered between his teeth; and then addressed a few words of encouragement to Margaret, as he informed her of the fishermen's promise to put off at once from the shore.

'Listen to the wind,' said Margaret, shuddering; 'hear the roar of the surf as it dashes against the beach yonder! It is no safe task to face this storm. Their hearts may have failed them, or their boat may have'—

She did not complete the sentence, for she saw by her lover's pale face that his own opinion was

much the same as her own. The rising tide ran in with the speed of a mill-sludge; the water soon reached nearly to Darrell's waist, and he had to direct Margaret to cling with all her force to the post, to prevent her being washed away as she stood on the rough stones at the foot of the piece of timber.

'O Frank, to find you again, only to lose you, and to know that you have given your life for mine!' murmured the heart-broken girl, as hope forsook her. 'Poor Aline, too, dying, perhaps for want of'—

'No, no,' interrupted the young sailor; 'Aline is well, or nearly so; and he hurriedly told of the invalid's strange recovery of the power of speech and motion, under the influence of intense anxiety for Margaret's safety; 'and I trust we'll live to be happy together this many a day. Boat ahoy!—Was not that an answer?'

Alas, no; it was but the scream of a seamew hovering past. Again Darrell called aloud, and this time he was all but sure that the hail was returned. He strained his eyes to pierce the blackness of the gloom, but could see nothing but the white waves, leaping up like wolves greedy for their spoil. He had been compelled again to lift Margaret in his arms, and as he did so, a taller wave than any of the rest struck him on the shoulder with a force that made him stagger. It was impossible long to hold on, now. Calm and resigned, Frank Darrell stooped to kiss Margaret's sweet calm face, and the brave girl's cold lips returned the farewell caress.

'Good-bye, dear—dear husband—my only love!' she murmured gently; but just then there broke forth a loud, hoarse shout, 'Ahoy, there, ahoy!'—and there was the gleam of a lantern that shewed the coble close at hand, the spray breaking over her in showers, as a couple of hardy boatmen bent forward over the bow, ready to throw the saving rope. The rescuers had arrived only just in time, however, for their aid to be efficacious, since even Darrell's strength was fairly spent when he and Margaret were dragged on board the coble. Half an hour later, and they were safe indeed, safe at home under the shelter of the cottage roof; and as Aline clung to her sister, weeping tears of joy, there was not one of them who did not give humble thanks to the Providence that had preserved them from the jaws of death.

Frank Darrell's tale was briefly told, and the reason of his long silence satisfactorily given. The ship in which he was first-officer, the *Pride of the Ocean*, had run aground, on the coast of China, on a reef which was not noted in the newest of the Admiralty charts, and, what was worse, in this helpless condition she was boarded by pirates, who pillaged the cargo, and murdered the captain and the greater number of the crew. From this massacre, the capricious lenity of the captors had excluded some of the ship's company, of which fortunate few Frank was one. He had been for months a captive among the pirates, well fed and hard worked when matters went well with these pig-tailed sea-robbers, half-starved and threatened with death when the gang returned empty-handed to their haunt among the islets of the coast. Then came an escape, under circumstances of great hardship and peril, and which was only effected through Darrell's courage and address, to which also was due the subsequent defeat

of the pirates by a British naval force, and the recovery of much valuable property belonging to European merchants.

The result of all this was, that when Frank Darrell returned home, carrying with him the good-will and good word of the authorities and mercantile community at Hong-kong, as well as a comfortable sum which had been awarded as his share of the salvage, a fresh piece of good-luck awaited him. The wealthy ship-owners, Lockwood and Page, to whom the *Pride of the Ocean* had belonged, immediately appointed the young man to the command of a fine new vessel, the *Canopus*, just off the stocks, and fitting for her first voyage to Shanghai. The first impulse of Frank Darrell, when his prospects thus brightened, had been to seek out Margaret, and claim the fulfilment of her promise, given in happier times, while the old parsonage in which she had been born was yet her home, to be his wife. But there was a new vicar now to preach from Mr Gray's pulpit and inhabit Mr Gray's house, and it was not without much inquiry and some difficulty that the young sailor tracked Margaret and her sister to their actual place of residence, and arrived, as has been seen, but just in time to save and shield her whom he loved from mortal harm.

Little more remains to be told. In a pretty cottage on the shore of the Southampton Water, dwells Margaret, now Margaret Gray no longer; and her sister Aline is still her inseparable companion; yet Aline, too, is altered, and for the better. Prosperity, change of scene, her own unselfish joy in Margaret's wedded happiness, have worked wonders for the invalid; and though her health is still frail, she suffers less, and her wilful, wayward moods of petulance have passed away, as by a charm, ever since that memorable night when Margaret last crossed the sands. The latter has no need to give music-lessons, or to teach inapt fingers to strike the ivory keys, now, and her rich voice and her rare talent are only displayed to give pleasure to her husband and her friends. Handsomer than ever, she is still the same brave, true-hearted Margaret whose sorrow at the bitterness of death was for another's loss rather than for her own danger; and of all the deserved good-fortune that has fallen to the lot of the young captain of the *Canopus*, there is nothing, as he well knows, to compare with the affection of the peerless wife who watches so lovingly for his return.

THE SKYLARK.

Far from trim pleasaunce, far from bustling town,
Amongst the folded splendours of the morn,
Sweet bird! resounds thy carol. By green corn,
Upon the edge of this furze-flaming down,
Halt me to listen, and, life's trouble thrown
To the fresh breezes, catch the peace that's born
Of nature. Long ere starry night outworn
Gives place to daylight, warblings faintly blown
Earthwards are heard—thy matins; e'en at noon,
When singing-mates are mute, thou floatest free
Through azure skies instinct with melody,
No bird, but music's soul in rapt'rous swoon.
Now baffled, as when poets miss their quest,
Thou fallest, grieving e'er from song to rest.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH. Also sold by all Booksellers.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 548.

SATURDAY, JUNE 27, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

A DAY AT BAYFORDBURY.

THE pleasure derived from a visit to Welwyn and its neighbourhood in 1873, encouraged a second excursion to this beautiful part of England at the end of May in the present year. On this occasion, the summer was further advanced; and what with trees in full leaf, park-scenery, birds, and flowers, Hertfordshire seemed more glorious than ever. In addition to the chorus of nightingales in early morning and at nightfall, we had all day long the note of the cuckoo sounding from every grove and thicket. To chilly east winds had succeeded the balmy atmosphere of an inland English summer; every circumstance being suggestive of walks and drives in winding green lanes environed by hedgerows gay with blossom. Among the places visited, there was one we shall specially mention. It was Bayfordbury.

A day was devoted to the purpose. The route chosen was through Tewin Water Park, which was in a blaze of beauty. The hawthorn trees scattered about the sloping banks were in masses of white flower, looking at a distance as if powdered with snow. A passing visit was made to Mardon Hill, a modern mansion, having in front a long avenue between lofty trees, reminding one of a prodigiously extended Gothic archway. Hereabouts, tall yews and cedars are agreeably interspersed in the lawns, and from their great bulk we can fancy that the soil is peculiarly favourable to their growth. Continuing the drive southwards through Panshanger Park, and crossing the Mimram at the village of Hertingfordbury, we, after two or three turnings, reach Bayfordbury, situated about three miles to the south-west of Hertford. It occupies the top of a rising ground, from which there is an extensive and richly wooded prospect southward. The mansion of Bayfordbury is of the Georgian era—a long drawn-out edifice in the Grecian style, with a broad flight of steps leading up to the doorway, amidst a row of pillars. After belonging to successive proprietors of note from the time of Edward the Confessor, the estate was purchased, about a century ago, by Sir William Baker,

Knight, who had been Lord Mayor of London, and has been inherited by his descendant, Mr W. R. Baker. The family is connected by relationship with Jacob Tonson, the eminent bookseller at the conclusion of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century, from whom have been handed down the portraits of the famous Kit-Cat Club. We had come to see these pictures, which are perhaps not generally known to form a unique collection in a country-seat in Hertfordshire; at least, we were unaware of the circumstance until arriving in the neighbourhood. Before walking into the spacious dining-room in which the collection is arranged, we may say a few words of the club, now a thing of some historical interest.

This celebrated association originated in London in 1703. It consisted of from forty to fifty noblemen and gentlemen who professed to be favourable to the succession of the House of Hanover, and, so far, it had a political bond of union. More ostensibly, its object was the encouragement of literature and the fine arts; though, whether it had any material influence in this direction, is not clearly demonstrated. Tonson, its founder, who was the son of a barber-surgeon in Holborn, began business as a bookseller about 1677, and brought himself into notoriety by being one of the early publishers of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and other poems, also publisher-in-chief for Dryden. It has been stated of Tonson that he was of an avaricious and overbearing character. That he had many squabbles with Dryden and others about 'copy-money,' seems pretty evident; but, when did irritable authors speak of publishers as anything but a set of unconscionable sharks? Jacob was perhaps no better than his neighbours; yet there must have been a degree of munificence, as well as geniality about him, otherwise he could not have surrounded himself with a body of men of letters and artistic tastes, and moulded them into a club for social and political purposes. To him we are clearly indebted for the Kit-Cat.

The way the club got this grotesque name is very simple. Its members had their meetings for some time in the house of Christopher Cat, a

pastry-cook and pie-baker in Shire Lane, near Temple Bar. There they gathered together to eat a tasty kind of small mutton-pies, and discuss the prospects of the Protestant succession. Hence, from the familiar name of the pie-baker, Kit Cat, came the droll designation of the club. It would now be a rare sight to see such a gathering. According to the fashion of the period, all gentlemen were well shaved, both as regards face and head, the natural hair being superseded by a highly frizzed and powdered periwig, flowing over the shoulders, and reaching half-way down the back. Then there was the richly embellished coat, of black, or of delicate purple velvet, with wide sleeves, and a blaze of buttons and embroidery on the ample cuffs. Some who no longer aimed at being beaux of the first water, silently protested against the wig, and adopted a cap, or loose sort of cowl, of coloured velvet. With two or three of such exceptions, of which Tonson was one, the members of the Kit-Cat maintained the grandeur of periwigs; and when seated round the table at their pies, custards, cheese-cakes, and flasks of Burgundy, Canary, and so forth, must have presented a sight worthy of looking at.

It has been alleged that in moulding the club into shape, and ministering to the tastes of the members, Tonson, with an eye to business, ingratiated himself with the different writers, and procured their works for publication. All envy and detraction! Jacob was a jolly tradesman above the ordinary run of booksellers, not to be spoken of in comparison with his rival Lintot. In the publishing world, he founded the practice of concentrating poets and wits of various capacities in his back-room and some crack tavern, where, indulging in the news and gossip of the day, new ideas in the literary line could be struck out. On the whole, Tonson, while an intense Whig and keen tradesman, was a capital specimen of a true-born Englishman, ready to give and take, and stand up for fair-play in public as well as private transactions. Judging from his portrait, he had a florid capacious countenance, with that species of double-chin which is indicative of good-living. Unfortunately, we do not make out the whole of his figure from the Kit-Cats. Stopping half-way down, or a little below the waist, we are not favoured with a view of the lower limbs. It has been said that, instead of a right and left, he had two left legs, which could not but give him a shambling gait in his locomotion. Perhaps this physical oddity, by raising jocular emotions, helped to popularise him among the light-headed eccentricities of Queen Anne's reign. It certainly did him no harm. A man of any mark with a hitch in his gait, does not in the least suffer in public estimation.

We are not to suppose that there was much gravity in the deliberations of the Kit-Cats. They recited verses, talked politics after a light fashion, and were great in their 'Toasts.' Every year, there was a fashionable beauty chosen by ballot, as the Toast for the ensuing twelve months, and her name was engraven with a diamond on the drinking-glasses. Poems were written by members of the club on these various beauties, by Garth, Addison, Maynwaring, the Earls of Halifax, Dorset, and Wharton, and others. How curious it would be to see these tributes on crystal to the beauties of a hundred and sixty or seventy years ago!

The club having grown in numbers beyond the capacity of the establishment in Shire Lane, Mr Cat was induced to remove to the Fountain Tavern in the Strand, where there was superior accommodation, and no falling off in the pies and confectionery. Here the club attained its zenith, while at the same time Tonson grew in wealth and social importance. One of his successful enterprises was the publishing of a splendid edition of *Caesar's Commentaries*, under the editorship of Dr Clarke, in 1712. At this time, so poor was England in the arts, that Tonson had to go to Holland to procure paper, and get engravings executed, for the work. Rising to fortune by his assiduity and enterprise, he purchased an estate at Ledbury, in Herefordshire. It must have been chiefly as an investment of spare cash, for he continued to reside in London, until, like most wealthy citizens, he discovered that it would be agreeable to have a house out of town, and he acquired a country-house at Barn Elms in Surrey. This acquisition was highly approved of by the Kit-Cats, for it afforded them occasional entertainments in the rural retreat of their secretary and patron. Here, the versifying, the bon-mots, and the toasting, went on with fresh zest. The idea was also struck out of all the members getting their portraits painted, with the view of presenting them as a lasting and friendly memorial to Tonson. Such being resolved on, Jacob, in grateful acknowledgment of the gift, had a room specially built for the reception of the pictures. By a slight mistake, the ceiling was made rather low. It was accordingly found necessary to limit the size of each portrait to thirty-six inches in height by twenty-eight inches in breadth. Sir Godfrey Kneller, as one of the Kit-Cats, and the most eminent artist after his predecessor, Sir Peter Lely, was appointed painter of the portraits. These he executed with a taste and delicacy which evoke admiration. Each picture, as soon as painted, was presented to Tonson, and hung up by him in a progressive series, with the respective names on the lower part of the gilt frame.

The painting of these pictures was a happy thought. It has given us the likenesses of some of the more remarkable personages from the reign of William III. to that of George I. In 1720, Tonson transferred his business to his nephew, after which, he lived principally on his estate in Herefordshire; and this change of residence, along with advanced age, rendered any regular attention to the club impracticable. The association, therefore, dwindled, and its original political mission being now fulfilled, there was no longer any necessity for its existence. It appears to have been dissolved previous to 1725. Jacob Tonson's life was drawn out to 1736, when he died, at probably eighty years of age. His nephew predeceased him by a few months, when the business passed to his grand-nephew and residuary legatee. The pictures of the Kit-Cats, as already mentioned, have come by inheritance into the possession of Mr W. R. Baker, a relative by descent of the Tonsons. And now let us have a look at them.

Entering the dining-room of Bayfordbury, they are all at once before us, hanging in two rows round the apartment, uniform in dimensions, each in a gilt frame. There are no other pictures in the room. The number of portraits is said to have been forty-eight, but we are shown only forty-three.

The discrepancy perhaps arises from the fact, that several portraits were left unfinished, and none in this condition appears. In the number presented, there are two exceptions to exact uniformity. Thomas Holles Pelham, Duke of Newcastle, and Henry Clinton, Earl of Lincoln, are represented seated at table in one picture; and the portrait of Kneller is of a small cabinet size. These two pictures occupy the space over the chimney-piece. One thing immediately strikes the visitor. It is the singular similarity of aspect in the portraits. The faces, with their fine eyes, and handsome noses, set in huge periwigs, have a general resemblance; and we would say the aspect of the different individuals is decidedly feminine. The uniformity is still further maintained by the richly embellished dress, as well as in the circumstance, that in each case one of the hands is shewn, holding a book, a staff, or a glass, or pointing to some object argumentatively. The sentiment of beauty in form and expression is very marked in nearly all. The face of Sir Richard Steele is characteristically Irish, and that of Tonson would fairly represent a self-sufficient bon-vivant. Limited to three feet in height, the canvas does not take in the figure much below the waist, or small of the back; but all that is shewn, except in the picture of Kneller, is life-size, as in ordinary half-length portraits. From this has arisen the term *kit-cat*, as ordinarily applied to portraits of this dimension.

We can only run over the names. The Duke of Newcastle and Earl of Lincoln, in one picture, as already mentioned; Charles Seymour, Duke of Somerset; Charles Lennox, Duke of Richmond; Charles Fitzroy, Duke of Grafton; William Cavendish, Duke of Devonshire; John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough; John Montague, Duke of Montague; Evelyn Pierpont, Duke of Kingston; Charles Montague, Duke of Manchester; Lionel Cranfield Sackville, Duke of Dorset; Thomas Wharton, Marquis of Wharton; Charles Sackville, Earl of Dorset—the Dorset so finely commemorated by Pope:

Dorset, the grace of courts, the Muse's pride,
Patron of arts, and judge of nature, died:
The scourge of pride, the sanctified, or great;
Of fops in learning, and of knaves in state.
Yet, soft his nature though severe his lay;
His anger moral and his wisdom gay.
Blest satirist! who touched the mean so true,
As shewed vice had its hate and pity too.
Blest courtier! who could king and country please,
Yet sacred keep his friendship and his ease.
Blest peer! his great forefathers' every grace
Reflected and reflecting in his race;
Where other Buckhursts, other Dorsets shine,
And patriots still or poets deck the line.

Algernon Capel, Earl of Essex; Charles Howard, Earl of Carlisle; Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington; James Berkeley, Earl of Berkeley; Richard Lumley, Earl of Scarborough; Francis Godolphin, Earl of Godolphin; Charles Montague, Earl of Halifax; James Stanhope, Earl of Stanhope; Spencer Compton, Earl of Wilmington; Richard Temple, Viscount Cobham; Charles Mohun, Lord Mohun; Charles Cornwallis, Lord Cornwallis; John Vaughan, Earl of Carberry; John Somers, Baron of Evesham; Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Orford—prime-minister of George II. bold, coarse, but keenly alive to the national welfare, who prac-

tised corruption systematically as a public duty, and was accustomed openly to maintain that all men had their price, and that all the world was governed by self-interest; Sir John Vanbrugh—holding a pair of compasses in his hand; Sir Samuel Garth, M.D.; Sir Richard Steele, Knight; John Tidcomb, Esq.; William Pultney, Earl of Bath; Joseph Addison, Esq.; George Stepney, Esq.; John Dormer, Esq.; Edmund Dunch, Esq.; William Congreve, Esq.; Charles Dartiquenave, Esq.; Thomas Hopkins, Esq.; Edmund Hopkins, Esq.; Arthur Maynwaring, Esq.—who assisted Steele in *The Tatler*, and wrote various political pamphlets and poetical *jeux d'esprits*; Jacob Tonson; and Sir Godfrey Kneller. Those portraits that were unfinished, and do not appear in the collection, need not be mentioned.

After walking round the room several times, scrutinising as remarkable an assemblage of portraits of eminent individuals as can be shewn in England, and which collectively must be of priceless value, we departed, carrying away the most pleasing recollections. Adjoining the dining-room there is a small apartment with cabinet and smaller pictures, having a window to the lawn on the south side of the edifice. Stepping from the window, which opens to the ground, we loitered a short time beside some splendid cedars, which, from an inscription, appear to have been planted as commemorative of a birth in 1765. The drive homeward, by way of Hatfield, revived the memory of last year's peregrinations over that magnificent domain of the Cecils, Marquesses of Salisbury. So ended a day at Bayfordbury, and an interview with the sprightly shades of the illustrious Kit-Cats! w. c.

MAD DOGS.

THE metropolis appears to have been lately under some perturbation regarding mad dogs, probably on no sufficient grounds, for the occurrence of only one or two cases of rabidness is apt to spread alarm, and raise a general war against the canine species. While such may be the common feeling, there are persons inclined to doubt the very existence of hydrophobia. We have heard a noted veterinary surgeon declare that this disease, as so called, was a delusion, and that, when it occurred in human beings, it was some other disorder—meaning, possibly, a variety of tetanus. The medical profession is certainly at a loss concerning the actual character of the disorder, and there are also differences of opinion as to its mode of treatment. It is conclusive, however, that call it what we may, there is a rabid condition incidental to dogs, wolves, and cats. Jackals in India are also said to be liable to the disorder. In the rabid condition, the saliva of the animal is of a poisonous nature; and the virus may be communicated by inoculation to the human being, and prove fatal to life. To communicate the disease to our system, it is not essential that the animal should bite; it will be quite sufficient if it lick any scratch or laceration on the hand or any other part of the body. That the inoculation affects the blood, is exceedingly obvious, for the action of the heart is disturbed, and death ensues more

from a stoppage of the circulation than from any other perceptible cause.

Among the writers on pathology and surgery who have given close attention to the disease ordinarily called hydrophobia, we may mention Cæsar H. Hawkins, Sergeant-surgeon to the Queen. Some years ago, he delivered a lecture on this particular disease at St George's Hospital, which has just been printed with his other works. It is the most lucid and comprehensive account of this frightful disorder which we have yet seen. He begins by telling the sad story of a boy of thirteen years of age, who had the misfortune to be bit on the right hand by a spaniel dog, which he was driving from the house. The dog was tied up by its master, to keep it from doing harm, but it died four or five days after inflicting the injury. The wound was small, and having healed, the boy felt nothing wrong for several weeks. He then complained of pains in his shoulder, and when his mother attempted to wash him, he felt a choking sensation, and ran away with dread. Admitted into St George's Hospital, he was treated with certain medicines to allay spasmodic convulsions in the throat; but without avail. The convulsions and a difficulty in swallowing were only symptoms of a mysterious disorder throughout the system. At length he became furiously delirious; then the violence subsided, and he died calmly without a struggle, little more than fifty hours from the first time that any spasm had been observed.

The remarks made by Mr Hawkins are worth quoting: 'In this case, the actual hydrophobia, or dread of water, was very great during most of the time; but this horror is by no means constant, and forms no essential part of the disease. I have even seen patients glad to swallow frequently, with much effort and exertion of the will, it is true, but still they did it, on account of the comfort they derived from the act, probably by washing away the viscid secretions of the throat. The spasms were principally of the muscles of the fauces, throat, and neck, and are generally confined to these parts.' The examination of bodies after death does not reveal any great derangement, except a certain degree of congestion in the stomach and blood. In the present case, as in others, the symptoms partly resembled those of tetanus; and from want of accurate observation, it seems likely that tetanus is often mistaken for hydrophobia. There is this important dissimilarity, however, between the two ailments: 'Traumatic tetanus may arise from any kind of injury whatever, a burn, a wound, a dislocation without any wound, a splinter inserted in a nerve or fascia, a mere laceration, a mere scratch; in hydrophobia, on the contrary, there must be inoculation from the saliva and other secretions from the mouth of a rabid animal.' Hydrophobia would thus almost appear to be a kind of blood-poisoning superadded to tetanus. Mr Hawkins says it is 'probable that the poison is formed in the tough viscid secretion of the fauces, which gives so much distress to the patient, those parts being invariably much altered in colour, and the glands enlarged. With this fluid of the mouth, whether mucous or salivary,

or both, repeated experiments have been made, and have constantly succeeded in producing the disease in the inoculated animal.'

There is some consolation in knowing, that of those who are bit by rabid animals comparatively few die of the injury. Pretty much as in the case of contagious disorders, the virus acts only where there is a certain susceptibility in the person inoculated. 'Many, again, who are bitten, and might be in a state for it, do not receive the poison, because it is wiped off by the clothes, or because several have been bitten successively. I remember an account of a physician, a Dr Ingelhong, who was engaged in some experiments with tianas poison, and accidentally let the knife he was using drop down on his foot, on which he sat down, and said: "In five minutes, I am a dead man." When two or three minutes had elapsed, however, the doctor thought he might as well wipe his foot, and shortly found that he was not dead, and that the poison had been arrested by the clothes. The disease is, in fact, from these and other causes, much more rare than the public fears would lead one to imagine.'

There is a curiously mistaken notion regarding hydrophobia. It is generally thought that the disease takes its name from a fear of water in rabid animals. Mr Youatt, an eminent naturalist, has pointed out that there is no hydrophobia in the dog. In a rabid state, his thirst is excessive, owing to the uncomfortable viscid condition of his mouth and throat. Instead of running away from water, he plunges his face into it up to the very eyes, and assiduously, but ineffectually, attempts to lap. Mr Hawkins adds: 'I may observe as to this point how completely the symptom of hydrophobia generally present in the human species is vulgarly transferred to the dog. I actually remember it being stated, that a London magistrate ordered a suspected dog to be taken to the pump, and there trying to drink, it was immediately turned loose again, with perfect confidence that it was not mad, after this very satisfactory test!'

On being bit by a dog presumed rabid, the best thing to do is to make an excision of the part, or, at the very least, to apply lunar caustic. Mr Youatt told Mr Hawkins, 'that a great many persons, in consequence of his peculiar practice, applied to him after they had been bitten by dogs, and that he always used lunar caustic, which he had employed upon himself and his servant every time, and in round numbers, perhaps four hundred others, and that, out of this number, one had died of fright, but none had had hydrophobia. This is a considerable number, of whom many must have been bitten by really mad dogs; and, on the whole, I am rather inclined to favour the *argenti nitras*, than the *potassa fusa*, if it can be got, to every suspected part.'

Instances occur of many persons being bit by a dog in a rabid condition, and of the virus taking effect in only one of them; so much depends on predisposition and other circumstances. Fright and irritability of constitution may act very injuriously, and placidity of temper under the application of remedies is much to be commended. If the virus has taken effect, the disorder will usually manifest itself in from five to six weeks after being bitten. Whether a person in a state of hydrophobia can give it to another, 'has not been proved.' Cases, however, are produced of hydrophobia being

communicated from dog to dog, to three or four in succession.

Mr Hawkins speaks doubtfully of any chance of saving the patient after the virus has demonstrably inoculated the system. By administering extract of *Cannabis indica*, and so forth, you may assuage the symptoms. 'But, after all,' he says, 'what do you gain if you remove altogether the spasms, which are so prominent a symptom during a greater part of the complaint? These spasms are only a symptom of the disorder, whatever it may be, just as they are in tetanus, indicating some obscure irritation of the nervous centres from some unknown cause. There are many hours' quiet in hydrophobia, the spasms in this case [that of the boy] scarcely being present for more than two hours out of the last twelve, but the disease was going on.' In short, the disorder, when fairly established, may be considered ineradicable. 'We have, in fact,' he candidly adds, 'no principle to guide us in the treatment of hydrophobia. We do not even know the mode in which the poison acts, whether it is carried into the circulation by the absorbents, as is most probable, so as to effect a change in the whole blood, just as the poison of small-pox does; or whether, as is often supposed, it causes some mysterious effect upon the nerves of the injured part, and, through them, on the brain and nervous centres.'

In a letter lately addressed to the *Times*, Dr Burdon Sanderson gives a popular summary of the premonitory indications of madness in dogs. The animal, he says, loses its natural liveliness; mopes about, and seeks to withdraw into dark corners; its appetite becomes depraved; it eats rubbish with avidity; and it snaps at other dogs. Any such appearance of snapping shews it is not safe. A healthy dog which is at large notices and takes an interest in the sights and sounds when walking out. 'The rabid dog, on the contrary, goes sullenly and unobservantly forward, and is not diverted by objects obviously likely to attract it.' If the dog be tied up, its bark loses its ring, and acquires a peculiar hoarseness. As the disorder increases, a viscid saliva is discharged from the mouth, the lower jaw hangs as if paralysed, the poor animal has an evident difficulty in swallowing, and he probably loses the power of his hind-legs. The madness is not confined to any particular season, though most common in summer, and, as already stated, the animal does not shun water. Dr B. Sanderson concludes by advising the destruction of all ownerless dogs; for usually in large towns they are the carriers of contagion.

One thing, and a very important one, remains to be specified. As prevention is better than cure, we cannot speak too strongly of the necessity for treating dogs with that degree of kind consideration which will go far to avert their falling into a rabid condition. Too frequently are they neglected, kicked about, half-starved, and denied proper shelter from the weather. Those who do not treat dogs with a proper regard to their wants, ought not to have them. The creatures had better be put out of existence than maltreated. Besides regular food and shelter, dogs require water to allay their thirst, particularly in warm weather, and neglect on this score is perhaps, more than anything else, the cause of madness. We believe that rabies more frequently occurs in male than female dogs. At least, the females in the smaller

and tender varieties are more easily managed as pets. This circumstance alone points to the error, or, indeed, the cruelty, of drowning female pups, and allowing the male ones to live. Nature, it is to be remembered, cannot be outraged with impunity. W. C.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER XL.—NEW YEAR'S EVE.

'I CREEPT up to my room, I know not how, and lay down by your side, wife, but feeling as though half the world were already between us. It was too near the break of dawn to admit of my removing the cause of my ruin from where it lay; and once more it ceaselessly presented itself before my eyes, not as I had seen it, but even in more hideous shape—endowed with a ghastly life, and pointing to me with outstretched arm, as though denouncing me—as, indeed, it had done—as a murderer! Your proposal that I should keep my room for a time, by reason of the change in my appearance, was not displeasing to me; for I felt that every face that looked on mine, must read my secret in it, and even your own dear presence was insupportable to me. I longed for night to come, that I might go about the dreadful work that I had set myself to do. As to telling you one syllable of what had happened, that was impossible; to have mentioned Dennis Blake would at once, I knew, have turned your thoughts to Richard, and then—I did not dare to think what then! I swear to you, that sooner than confront the idea of losing you, I preferred that my mind should keep company with that other haunting image—my dead brother. Oh, how could that wise writer, whom we once read together, have said, "there are possibilities which our minds shrink from too completely for us to fear them!" I shrank, indeed, from this one, but it was because I feared it, as the wicked on their deathbed fear the grave. The day came to its end at last; and in the night—while you slept fast, outworn, I doubt not, with anxieties and fears, yet spared as yet from knowing what I knew—I rose, and went out to the toolhouse, and by the passage that Blake had made into the cellar. Had ever man, I wonder, since the earth was made, so dreadful a task to do in it as I had? Yet I did it. I took Richard's body away—what horrors are hidden beneath those common words!—and buried it—no matter where: where it will not be found, till earth gives up its dead. That done, I had some hopes of safety, and could think a little, and with calmness. If only the ink in which I had written my own accusation should perform its office, there was now but Blake's bare word to hurt me—his against mine: the word of a cheat and scoundrel against an honest man's. In that appalling hour, a tale of which you had once spoken to me recurred to my mind—for nothing that you ever said have I forgotten—respecting one who, being made captive by a savage tribe, was doomed to death, unless, as he had foretold, the Great Spirit should interfere on his behalf with some

prodigy upon the fatal day. An eclipse had been predicted for that date in a cheap almanac which he chanced to have about him, and to that event—whether calculated by science, or merely the hazardous guess of some empiric, he knew not—the prisoner had to trust. As it happened, the thing took place, and he was saved. And this was now my case, except that I had better reason to believe in the seeming miracle. In ten days' time, when that villain came again, he might find me free.

'I need not tell you, Maggie, how this poor hope was put to flight by your own innocent hands: how you tracked me in the garden, out of pure love and duty—as I went to lay my spade and pickaxe by, and then confronted me in the house—still for my good, sweet heart!—with the charge of compassing harm to Dennis Blake. I had no thought of harming him, yet it was better to let you think I had, than that you should hear the truth: yet even the truth must now be but a little way off, I knew. Now I had owned that I meant to kill him; you must needs believe Blake when he told his tale (for if it was not true, why should I have sought his life?). I could no longer defy him, so far as you were concerned, though I might defy the law; and what was this small gain as compared with that huge loss! Even though acquitted by others, I could not stay to read repugnance and abhorrence in your eyes; I do not say the conviction of my guilt, for I have proved my innocence: still, I did kill him.'

Ay, there was the blot: Maggie could have forgiven all but that, nay, even that itself, perchance, but could have forgotten it never. It was well in him to have left her; she confessed she could never have taken that hand in hers again which had struck Richard down and slain him. Yet was not John dead too, and in a manner also slain; and did not *his* blood also cry out for justice, the justice she alone could give it! She read on.

'I did not dare to say good-bye to you, Maggie: my heart would have burst asunder, and I should have perished at your feet—a guilty man, as you must then have needs believed. I resolved to write all my story out, and then to leave home before the dawn—I cared not whither. It was an easy task, for I had conned it a thousand times; and here it is. Whatever steps he takes, no harm can befall you now from Dennis Blake. If, however, my departure has caused him to return to Rosebank—before the appointed day, and to reveal to you what he knows, then it must needs be that he has convinced you. Thence it is that I shall write upon this paper, "To be read when I am dead, or when you have lost your faith in me." It will be no blame to you if you have done so, dearest; yet you will now have read the explanation, point by point, of all that happened, and the whole story of my wretched life. I hope, and pray, that before it meets your eyes, I shall be dead, since, being dead, my tale will be more like to move your soul to pity and forgiveness. Oh, think not how I have sinned, but how I have suffered!—that many a time I could have slain myself, but for the thought that loss of life was loss of you; that I would do so now, but for the word I gave, which, being

passed to you, is sacred and inviolable. I have sinned, I know—a sin that may, indeed, be even unpardonable, since it was committed against yourself. It was base and selfish in me, when Richard had perished as he did, to suffer you to wed me: so much of guilt I own to; for the rest, Heaven is my judge, and it is just.

'Forget me, darling—O Maggie, Maggie! to think that I should live to utter such a prayer!—forget me: that is the best that I can wish for you.'

Those were his last words; so ended the sad story of John Milbank's life. 'Forget me,' to the woman he had lived for, died for! Never yet, perhaps, has the woman existed who could have forgotten under the like circumstances; or if such has existed, it was not Maggie. She had forgiven him, all that was hers to forgive him—his trespass against herself; yet she would never forget him, or cease to honour his unhappy memory. What touched her most of all, was his humility—his taking it for granted that she would have made no sacrifices to rescue his name from shame. He had not stated what cruel terms had been imposed upon him by Blake, 'since he will never profit by them;' and again, 'No harm can befall you now through Dennis Blake.' He had supposed that anything that villain could have said against himself, or caused others to say, would be of 'no harm' to her. At how low a rate had he been content to count her love for him, while lavishing on her the treasures of his heart's devotion! That she could never have lived with him, after she had come to the knowledge of what had happened to Richard, she admitted to herself even now; but she confessed her husband's worth. She recognised, without flinching, what manner of man he had been on whom she had thrown away her love in youth, and what manner of man was *this* one. She wondered, with him, how she could have clung to such a worthless weed, while this flower of manhood was pining for her; how the devotion of the one could have counted for so little, and the admiration of the other for so much: but she had gained her wisdom at the cost of both their lives. One thought alone gave her comfort: she had opened the packet because she knew that he was dead, not because she had lost faith in him. She had felt all along, notwithstanding Blake's statement, and many a fact more or less in corroboration of it, that, somehow or other, her husband would be proved guiltless—that he was incapable of guilt—and she rejoiced that her conviction had been independent of this proof. She had never lost faith in him; but she had it now more strongly than she ever had: she believed his tale, she pitied him, and she loved him.

'What dat, mamma; Granny's hair?'

Little Willie, tired at last with his picture-book, had been watching her as she broke the seal of the little packet that the ship-captain had sent to her, containing the lock of hair cut from her dead husband's head.

She lifted the child on to her knees, and caressed him with inexpressible tenderness.

'No, darling,' sighed she; 'it is not Granny's hair, though it is white enough to be so.'

How sharp must have been the agony that had blanched it; what a memento of a wasted life it was! He was gone out of the reach of her pity; but,

thank Heaven, she had baffled his enemy, and his memory, untarnished by public disgrace, was still left to her to revere and honour. For its sake, she felt that she could still do much, could battle for it—if need were, and notwithstanding what her present victory had cost her—to the end. To one thing only, she felt herself unequal—namely, to remain, even for a single night, beneath that dreadful roof. That very afternoon, therefore, when the early dusk had fallen, she put on cloak and bonnet, and, with the child, set forth to her father's house. The old man was overjoyed to see her; and her arrival seemed to him, as indeed it well might do, the most natural thing in the world.

'I am glad, dear Maggie, that you have come hither,' said he tenderly, 'and do not spend this wretched New-year's Eve alone at home.'

'I have come to spend not only New-year's Eve with you,' she answered, 'but the new year, and all new years that God may please to send us; for I have no home now except the old one!'

CHAPTER XL.—PERPLEXITIES.

It was one of the advantages consequent upon her having been 'buried alive,' as the Hilton folks had designated her quiet married life, although they had owned John Milbank to be 'the Best of Husbands,' that Maggie was not now pestered with those conventional calls of sympathy and shallow expressions of condolence which so often add a new trouble to the sense of bereavement. 'Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house, lest he be weary of thee,' was an injunction written surely with especial reference to those would-be comforters, who at such times disturb with well-meant commonplaces our thoughts of Death and Loss. In Maggie's case, such visitors would have been an infliction indeed, and something worse, since itching ears and prying eyes were sources of positive danger. Her husband's secret had been preserved so far, but it was by no means secure; and it behoved her still to be on her guard, and wary with her tongue, in reply to all questions concerning him. The few persons, however, whose intimacy permitted of their visiting her, loved her too well, or respected her grief too much, to indulge their curiosity upon that subject. Her father, reticent by nature, was too glad to find his daughter once more making her home beneath his roof, to pry into the causes which had induced her to leave her own; and, indeed, it seemed natural enough that Rosebank, with its now doubly sad and mysterious associations, should be distasteful to her. It had, in fact, become so hateful to her, that if she had not been absolutely obliged to do so, for business reasons, she would probably never have set foot in it again. It was arranged that it was to be left unfurnished, this method of disposing of it appearing to her upon the whole as the safer—the less likely to give a handle to Rumour, than the dismantling of the place, and letting it go to ruin, as she would otherwise have preferred to do. Even as it was, certain precautions had to be taken, the consideration of which pressed upon her with urgency. The existence of the underground passage between the toolhouse and the cottage was as yet unknown save to two persons beside herself, and one of them bound in heavy recognisances to keep it secret. But when the house should become occupied by another tenant, the fact must neces-

sarily be discovered, and made public, to form the groundwork of a hundred surmises and suggestions, all more or less perilous, and one of which, though by hap-hazard, might be fatal. It was essential, therefore, secretly to remove the traces of Dennis Blake's burglarious entry into the cellar; and in order to accomplish this, she sought the aid of the only other man who was already acquainted with the fact, and to whom she was already indebted for her present security—namely, Mr Inspector Brain.

It was dangerous, for she was not without an uneasy suspicion that that astute officer was not so thoroughly convinced of the falsehood of Blake's story as he had affected to be; but no alternative presented itself. He was the only man who *could* help her. Moreover, if he had done her so good a turn out of pity for her miserable condition, as well as because the weight of evidence had lain upon her side, that consideration would weigh with him still. After long cogitation, she accordingly sent for him to her father's house.

'Mr Brain,' said she, 'I have purposely hitherto forbore to express to you my sense of the infinite service you have rendered to me and mine, in the hope that my poor husband would himself return to suitably acknowledge it. That hope is now destroyed.'

Here she broke down, not by design, as some women would have done, but because it was almost the first time that she had given utterance to any word respecting the dead man.

'Pray, pray, don't mention it. I beg you not to distress yourself; your talking on so, madam, cannot but be most injurious to your health,' urged the polite inspector. Perhaps he had entertained the idea in private that there was really something more 'fishy' about that Rosebank affair than he had professed to believe. Under that tightly fitting professional costume, he wore, indeed, a very warm heart—hard and resolute against scoundrels of all kinds, but tender towards lovely women in distress. It is not an exceptional state of things, by any means. The very last time that a beautiful murderess was brought from Ultima Thule (or thereabouts) to the metropolis by a sergeant of police, it is on record that that official, notwithstanding that he was of mature age and a married man, was so wrought upon by the charms of his prisoner, that, though faithful to his trust, he cut his own throat when that fair lady was eventually *sus. per coll.*, through remorse at having been the means of her capture: and Maggie, who was no murderess, nor the wife of one—for Mr Brain, it must be mentioned in fairness to his integrity, never thought *that*—was very beautiful, and her woes had without doubt touched the inspector nearly. They did not now touch him less, as she sat before him in her widow's weeds, not sobbing with passionate vehemence (as he could bear to see women do, or he could never have won his inspectorship, or done a day's duty), but dropping the silent tears which she would fain have restrained, and for which she seemed, as it were, to apologise. She was 'a lady every inch of her,' as he afterwards confidentially affirmed, and knew how to treat a man with courtesy, without offering him something to drink.

'If I have never spoken of recompense, Mr Brain,' she went on, 'it was, believe me, through the fear of offending you, and also lest such an offer should afford the least suggestion of a bribe.'

The inspector turned scarlet; his conscience, in

matters of duty, was tolerably sensitive, and perhaps, as we have said, it was slightly pricked; but here the natural delicacy of Maggie's character, shewn in her embarrassed looks and tone, stood her in better stead with him than the perfection of art could have done; it was so evident that she was feeling pain upon his account, not fear upon her own.

Mr Brain felt that it was a moment when discipline must be maintained, or that it would be all over with him. 'I only did my duty, madam,' observed he gruffly.

'I know it, Mr Brain, and I am only about to do what I feel to be mine. It is not unusual, as I understand, for private persons to recompense gentlemen of your calling for your professional services; and though I feel that any pecuniary payment will still leave me your debtor as regards the kindness and consideration you have shewn to one in my unfortunate position, you must allow me to acknowledge it so far as I can. But for your prompt and sagacious behaviour with respect to Blake, my husband's memory might at this moment be stained with a charge as foul as false, the murder of a brother, for whom, as I well know, he has made, through life, enormous sacrifices, and against whom he has never imagined evil. Such a service to me is priceless, and but ill represented by this note for fifty pounds. The acceptance of it, I need not say, leaves you perfectly free to take any further steps which your duty may suggest to you; it is but a recognition of the past.'

'It is a pretty tidy sum, madam,' remonstrated Mr Brain. 'Why, a ten-pun' note would have been handsome.'

'I am sure you will not distress me, Mr Brain, by rejecting it. However, if you think yourself overpaid, you can still further assist me, if you will. I have sent for you to-day, I own, not wholly to give myself this pleasure; I need your help to conclude the matter which you have wrought thus far so successfully. If the existence of that underground passage to the cellar at Rosebank should come to be known—as it needs must be, when the house is let—it will set gossiping tongues at work, which Blake's malice may easily render successful. Is it not possible to employ some trustworthy person—not belonging to this part of the country—'

'Certainly, certainly, madam,' interrupted the inspector, secretly relieved, perhaps, at the nature of her demand, which was, after all, only the completion of the service he had already performed. 'I can send for a bricklayer from London, who will close the tunnel at both ends, do the job thoroughly, in a couple of hours, and never ask the reason why.'

'If you will cause that to be done,' said Maggie quietly, 'so soon as I have taken measures, by getting the servants out of the way, for its being accomplished privately, and will be so good as to let me know the cost, you will be conferring an obligation on me only second to that I have already incurred.'

The request was reasonable enough, since all that had hitherto been done to baffle Blake might become mere loss of time and trouble, unless it were granted; but, nevertheless, the inspector hesitated; the proposition, now that he came to reflect upon it, involved such an absolute partisanship in the matter, made him so art and part in it, that he

could not help asking himself: 'If there really is anything wrong in this Rosebank job, shall not I, Inspector Brain, become an accessory in it after the fact, by obliging this good lady?'

Maggie read his thoughts almost as quickly as they flashed upon him.

'If it is going beyond your duties, Mr Brain, I beg you not to stretch them upon my account. If you will only give me the address of the workman upon whom you said you can rely, and even that in confidence—'

'Very good, ma'am; yes: you can write it down at once, if you please: it is best not to put my hand to it, for, like your husband, I have enemies of my own, who would be glad to have an opportunity to do me an ill turn in the Force; and you needn't tell this man that it was I who recommended you; be so good as to say it was a friend.'

'And it *was* a friend, I am sure,' said Maggie earnestly, and with a smile that shot right home to the inspector's heart. He felt himself a brute to have experienced any scruples in obliging her; and something worse, to have suspected her to be connected, however remotely, with a crime. So this arrangement was put into effect, and so far as Rosebank was concerned, Maggie felt secure. One possibility, however, never ceased to haunt her, that somehow, some day, the remains of the unhappy Richard should be discovered and identified. Where John had buried them, she knew not; but she had seen him that night, with his spade, come from the direction of the spinney, and in it she pictured to herself their unhallowed resting-place. It could not have been very deep, for it was winter-time, and the ground like iron, and was it not certain, that one day, perhaps soon, perhaps after the lapse of years, the terrible secret should be laid bare, notwithstanding all her precautions! Nay, if such should be the case, and Mr Brain should be alive when that discovery was made, would not those very precautions be, to his mind, the proof of her husband's guilt, and of her own conviction of it! And if, on the other hand, the inspector should die, would not Dennis Blake, now doubly made her foe, be once more at liberty to prey upon her fears, and, by instituting an investigation on his own account, to make his power felt indeed! As soon as one source of danger was done away, in short, poor Maggie became the victim of new apprehensions, which, it seemed, were never to end until all should be revealed; there would be no further cause of fear to her, only because the worst that could befall had happened. The criminal, she had read, is never secure; and she, who was neither criminal nor cognisant of any crime, was doomed, it appeared, like him, to dwell in the constant dread of discovery. Her very faith would, at times, faint and fail beneath this load of care; for Could the government of the world be just, she asked herself, when the innocent was thus made to suffer like the guilty? Nay, how could she reconcile with justice the whole tenor of her unhappy husband's blameless life, nourished as it had been upon vain hopes, that had had their fruition only by an accident, which itself had overwhelmed him with ruin and despair! How was it, how could it have been permitted, that the crime—nay, not the crime—that the impulse of a moment, should have brought the fruit of a well-spent life to nought, and withered such a goodly tree!

In vain she tried to comfort herself with the reflection, that John was happy now at last, and compensated for his life of unrest and self-denial; and that presently, in Heaven's good time, they would meet again, with this Shadow no more between them! Maggie was a good woman, but it is given but to few mortals to have their convictions in the happy Future so firmly set as to outweigh the miserable Present. She even ventured to use the argument of comparison with respect to Richard. If all this wretchedness had not happened, would she not have had to endure other miseries, as bad, or almost as bad, as Richard's wife, the wife of a sot, a forger—and the worst of forgers, one who had made use of an innocent hand to perform his crime—faithless, dishonoured in her own eyes, and perhaps successful in his threatened scheme of teaching her the vices to which he was himself the slave! As Richard's wife, in short, might she not have been even as miserable as was his brother's widow! An argument surely more creditable to our humanity than that which would extract consolation from a comparison with the misfortunes of *others*; but yet one that failed to console her, for, to experience consolation, one must at least feel that the catastrophe has happened, that Fate for that time (for, alas, she is insatiable!) has worked her utmost malice; and not, as Maggie felt, that the worst was still impending. But for *that*, indeed, her father's devotion, and little Willie's demands upon her loving service, might in time have won her from the past; but from these dreadful possibilities of the future they could never win her. A thoughtless word, an idle question, could at any moment array them before her eyes; and when even Martha Linch—whose perceptions of what sympathy demanded, had been shewn to be most delicate, and who had restrained that usually unruly member, her tongue, in connection with all that had happened, in a manner that the engraver had pronounced to be miraculous—asked one day to look at that lock of hair belonging to dear Mr John, which the captain had sent home, Maggie was overwhelmed with confusion. The hair was in a closed locket round her neck, but she mechanically placed her hand upon it, as though Martha's eyes could have pierced the gold. The idea suggested to her by little Willie's remark, of pretending that what the locket contained was her father's hair, did indeed strike her; but she rejected it, as likely to lead to contradiction and complications; and she had absolutely nothing to say, save to refuse her companion's request. To have shewn her the dear relic, would necessarily have excited question and comment, for when Martha had last seen John, his hair was brown as the filbert; and yet, not to shew it, must have seemed a strange thing also. Luckily, Martha Linch, being one who never took offence, but was always fearful of offending, was herself the apologist in this instance; but Maggie thought, with a shudder, how much worse might have been her difficulty had it occurred with some one else.

This was only an example of the perplexities of her unhappy position. It seemed that it must behave her to be ever on the watch lest her tongue should trip, ever wearing the shield upon her arm, to turn not only the shaft of malice, but the arrow, shot at a venture, from the defenceless memory of the dead. Worse than all, she felt herself chained

to Hilton, and the neighbourhood of the roof she most abhorred; for, in case any discovery should take place, how necessary was it that she should be on the spot, to stamp the first flicker of suspicion out, which else would grow and grow, like flame itself, till it defied all efforts to subdue it.

ON BOARD THE DEVASTATION.

It was a lovely spring morning last April, and the sun was shining brilliantly as we stepped, from the pier at Portsmouth, on board a boat that was to convey us to that strangest of all sea-monsters, Her Majesty's ship *Devastation*.

As we pull out from the shore, we see the training-ship *St Vincent* robbed of her masts, and the old *Victory*, both antediluvian vessels, and as powerless, compared with even our modern iron-clads, as Noah's ark would be against an old seventy-four. Before us lies 'the Island,' its houses glistening in the sunlight, and its hills standing out clear and well defined against the blue sky. On our left are the three forts at Spithead, still unfinished and still unarmed, objects that even now are looked upon by some as costly mistakes, which are unnecessary in these days of torpedoes and of Devastations. Right ahead of us lies the *Devastation* itself, looking like anything but a ship. She seems to be as much like what one is accustomed to consider a ship as a turtle is like a fish; there is nothing ship-shape about her, except that she floats on the water, and carries guns and men. As we approach her, our idea as to her unlikeness to a ship becomes more and more confirmed; and as we step on board, we realise the fact, that we never before saw anything at all like her.

Having made our salute to some eight or ten naval officers who were standing on what would be the deck of a regular ship, but here, was either a turret, which suddenly spun round like a whirlingig, or a queer kind of slippery roof of something else, which was for some purpose which nobody knew anything about, we put on our observing spectacles, and unlocked the doors of our ears, so as to see and hear all the wonderful things that were to be seen and heard. We ascertained that this mighty mass of iron, with huge vitals composed of about twenty-six engines, was soon about to get under weigh, and was to run out to sea, in order to fire her monstrous guns, and try practically the working of various mechanical and electrical arrangements which have lately been fitted and adjusted in her. Before the anchor is hauled up, there is time for us just to look round the monster; and we first ascend a circular turret about twenty-five feet in diameter. In this turret there are two guns, weighing thirty-five tons each; they throw shot of about seven hundred and fifty pounds, and require to be fed with a bolster of powder containing one hundred and ten pounds. As we stand on this turret, we notice two or three chimney-pots coming about two feet above the plane of the top; and on peeping down one of these we see a human face surmounted by a cap, and are saluted with 'Good-morning.' We find that the chimney-pot is a

bullet-proof look-out, from which the inhabitants of the turret can peep out and contemplate the surrounding sea.

While we are investigating the upper part of this floating mass, we suddenly find the distant island and the side of the vessel spin round us with enormous speed; we look down, and then note that a not very powerful officer in the turret has turned a small wheel with his finger and thumb, and lo! the massive turret, coated with enormous plates of iron, the two thirty-five-ton guns and their carriages, and some twenty men, are sent round as easily as a boy can twist a teetotum. The mighty giant Steam thinks nothing of moving five hundred tons without noise and without risk; and so docile is this giant, that a child can control the movements of the mass set in motion by its agency.

From the turret we ascend to an upper deck, which does look something like part of a ship, for there are hammocks at the side, rolled up as usual, and covered with tarpaulin; the boats, too, hang from 'davits' over the side; and though we are walking as it were on the top of a mushroom, still we now begin to feel we are on board ship.

Our first difficulty in looking down on this vessel is to tell which is the head and which the stern. To decide this, is as difficult as to discover which is the front, and which the back of a modern lady's bonnet. One end looks like the head; and we walk to the other end of the upper deck, and look down, when an exactly similar shape presents itself. We don't like to ask which is the head and which the stern, so we look out for some sign. We note that there is a huge chain-cable lying on the lower deck at one end, and we had all but decided that this must be the head, when it occurred to us, that as the *Devastation* was unlike everything else, perhaps she was anchored by the stern. Nelson anchored his ships at Trafalgar by the stern; so, why should not the *Devastation* be thus secured? In fact, we wait for more evidence, before we decide so doubtful a question as, which is the head and which the stern of the *Devastation*.

An officer now kindly asks us if we will step down to his cabin; and by dint of many descents, we soon find ourselves in darkness, and wait the successful search for lucifers before we can examine the cabin, for it is below the water, and has no port or window by which daylight can be admitted. As we enter, we encounter a somewhat chill, sepulchre-flavoured gust of air, and our attention is called to a thick pipe running along the roof of the cabin. In this pipe there are many holes, making it look like a colander; and through these holes air rushes with force enough to extinguish a candle. Wind is forced through this pipe by fans, worked by steam, and a change of air is thus effected in the cabins. We are taken through dark passages, we scramble up and down dark ladders, and we feel we are lost, for it would be impossible for us to find our way back again from anywhere; so we follow our guide with desperate struggles to keep up with him, and at length arrive once more in daylight, near the gangway leading to the turrets. After an inspection of the ship, we come to the conclusion, that she is one of the most complicated pieces of ship-building ever conceived by man.

We now ascend to the hurricane-deck, and stand beside a small sort of greenhouse, in which are four enormous wheels, used for steering. This steer-

ing apparatus is nearer the head than the stern, and the men steering can see well before them. On the table behind the wheels we see a large chart of the coast of the Isle of Wight and the soundings at Spithead; and the compasses and parallel ruler on the chart, indicate that 'cross-bearings' may be made use of at any time to determine the ship's position. At the word, the ship's cable, an enormous iron chain, begins to crawl round a revolving windlass, and to creep down a hole and disappear in the mysterious depths below. This windlass is turned by steam, and readily hauls short the cable, and finally brings up the anchor. The cable, which has lain on the muddly or sandy bottom, is not allowed to enter the ship without being well washed; a powerful jet of water therefore plays on it just as it comes near the deck, and thoroughly cleans it. This jet of water is also forced out by steam. As the strange-looking anchor comes on deck, the *Devastation* moves slowly ahead, and glides through the water as easily as if she were a ship, instead of being a sort of internal machine created by some tremendous engineering mind, when in a state of nightmare. In fact she is more like one's infantile idea of a bogie than anything we have ever seen.

As the monster gets under weigh, we note that one man steers, and does so easily.

'Steam?' we suggest, as we point to the man and his wheel.

'Yes,' is the reply. 'Have you seen the engine?'

'No.'

'Then we will take a look at it before breakfast.'

We descend into the bowels of the ship; and there is one of the twenty-six engines, all worked by the steam generated in the principal boilers. As we look at this, an 'eccentric' suddenly spins round in the most excited manner, and gives some twenty revolutions, then stops, and shortly again spins round.

'We can steer from here,' says our guide, 'if necessary; this little wheel will do it all.'

'Steam, of course?'

'Yes; steam.'

We begin to add up, and we find that the boat we came in is hoisted by steam, the turrets are turned by steam, the guns themselves are raised or lowered by steam, the ship is ventilated by steam, steered by it, the cable is washed by it, and the vessel, of course, is moved by it. We are surprised, when we sit down to breakfast, to find that an oversight has been committed by the designers of the *Devastation*, for the fowls on the table are carved by manual labour, and not by steam; and even the bread has to be cut by hand.

The morning continues bright and fine, as we glide through the water, pass the *Warner* and the *Nab* light-boats, and steering south-east, and then nearer south, pass the low land of the island, and come opposite the bold headland of Culver Cliff, then pass the village of Sandown, and opposite the high-lying town of Shanklin, and then ease the ship's speed, in order to get out a target, for we are going to fire the mighty guns of the *Devastation*.

As we steamed from Spithead to the 'back of the island,' we noted that the *Devastation* rolled most palpably, although there was very little sea on; that she would roll very much in a heavy sea, seemed from this experience very likely; and we

ascertained that she could do so, she having rolled already as much as thirteen degrees each way. The amount of the vessel's rolling and pitching is ascertained by an apparatus, invented by a gentleman named Froude, the term 'Froude's' machine being used to designate this contrivance.

We ascend to a rough wooden box of large size, in which are some balanced arms of wood: these arms, as the vessel rolls or pitches, are kept pointed at the horizon; and a string attached to one end of these arms is connected with a pencil in a receptacle below, so that the pencil traces out automatically certain lines, which vary in length according to the pitch of the ship.

As we steamed on, the spray broke over the lower deck, and a white-crested wave rose before her bows; but there was not enough sea on to show us the 'Devastation wave,' as it is termed; and as the day advanced, the wind decreased in force, and the sea consequently calmed down. A tent-like apparatus is now hoisted over the side and lowered into the water: as soon as this floats, the 'tripping-line' is held taught, a wooden peg snatched out from between two loops, and a target floats on the sea. The monster vessel moves slowly away from the target; and we now have an opportunity of seeing the handiness of this craft, for she is turned in a small circle of not more than two hundred and fifty yards in diameter, and obeys her helm like the puniest yacht in the Solent.

And now a bugle sounds, and men and officers begin to bustle about, like ants stirred by a stick in their nest. Some rush down gangways, some haul themselves up; each man has a station, and makes for it, for the signal has been given to beat or sound 'to quarters.' The iron stanchions and chains that did duty for bulwarks on the lower deck, are all removed, and turned down so as to be clear of the guns; and we now note that each man and officer is armed with a cutlass or sword, whilst some dozen Sniders are placed handy on deck, with a box of Boxer's ammunition near them. It is suggested to us as probable, that when the hundred-and-ten-pound bolster of gunpowder is fired off, the light stock of the boat, such as oars, seats, &c. may jump out, and may come down on our head; so we are recommended to take up a position in a small iron building on deck, from which we could see the target and yet be safe from 'windfalls.'

In the floor of this building there is an iron grating covering a small den, in which a naval officer appears to be detained as prisoner: it is a very rat-trappy-looking place, a sort of catch-eul alive, oh. This officer's duty seems to be to blow into some wide-mouthed pipes, which whistle cheerfully shortly after he has withdrawn his mouth from them: he then murmurs sundry messages, such as: 'Fore-turret, load;' 'Is after-turret ready?' &c. to which are given replies which we trust are not the result of his imagination, for we hear no voice or sound, and are left without other evidence of the reply than the statement of the gentleman in the rat-trap: everybody, however, seems to believe him, so we also give him all faith.

As the monster turns slowly round, shewing its broadside to the target, the captain turns to an active-looking officer who is armed with a sextant in one hand and a book of tables in the other. This officer has been engaged measuring the angular distance between the horizon and the target. The height of the observer's eye above the sea-

level being known, the angle subtended as above gives the range, which can be ascertained by looking into tables calculated for the purpose. This method, termed 'Ryder's,' is now generally used on board ship to find the range, and was proposed about a dozen years ago; but was of course ignored, and the inventor snubbed, by the authorities.

'What do you make it?' says the captain.

'One thousand and fifty,' says the officer.

'Are they all ready?' inquires the captain of the victim in the rat-trap.

'All ready, sir,' is the reply.

'Independent firing,' says the captain; and we note that the majority of individuals put their fingers in their ears. We stand for some minutes with our fingers stopping our ears, looking earnestly at the target. The monster vessel slowly glides through the water, and gently rolls a few degrees either way, rendering accurate firing a matter of skill in judging at what instant to discharge the gun.

Several minutes having elapsed without a shot, we remove our fingers from our ears, and at the same instant, the deck seems to jump under us; a terrific shock to our whole system occurs, a deafening roar, and then, whirr-r-r, a shot, looking like a sea-bird, speeds just over the target, just touches the sea, sends up a jet of spray a hundred feet in the air, grander-looking than the largest fountain at Sydenham, and whiter than driven snow. On rushes the shot, its wicked, vicious noise distinctly audible, and again it strikes the sea, after a bound of about two thousand yards. Another column of water rises in the air, and slowly descends in spray. A third fountain arises as the shot thus 'ducks and drakes' it along the sea; and then the iron missile, that weighs a third of a ton, having lost its velocity, sinks beneath the surface, and is no more seen. Scarcely has the first shot disappeared, when we again feel the same terrific shock; the deck leaps, there is a crack near us, and then a mass of smoke, thicker than the densest London fog, covers us, as the turret to windward has belched its one hundred and ten pounds of powder, and discharged its iron bolt at the target. We wait for the clearing, and we then see, from the mark in the water, that our shot struck short; not enough allowance for the roll of the ship having been made.

In five minutes the guns are again loaded; but the *Devastation* has altered her position, and now she, the target, and a distant pilot-boat are nearly in line; and as the shot from the vessel will range five thousand yards, it is not safe to fire, as the boat is estimated at within that distance.

The *Devastation* is sent ahead at full speed, the order to do so being conveyed to the engine-room by telegraphic signal from the upper deck; she is turned in a small circle, and takes up a new position, where a clear horizon is before her; and she again discharges, first one, then another of her monster guns in the fore-turrets, she lying head on to the target at the time. The aim, as before, is good, and had a ship been where the target was, she shortly would have been at the bottom of the sea.

After a few more rounds have been fired, a new method of firing the guns is tried—this consists in discharging both of either guns in either turret simultaneously by electricity. To do this, is very simple: the captain or officer who is to fire intimates that there will be electric firing of one, two,

or all the guns; these guns are loaded, and their vents connected electrically with the wires in the iron building on deck. Either by steering, or by the movement of the turrets, the guns are kept trained on the target. The officer who is to fire stands watching the distant horizon, and when all is ready, and all clear, he presses down a small connector, and the electric current immediately ignites the tube, and discharges the gun or guns.

We had already heard two guns fired quickly, one after the other; we were now to experience the result of two guns being fired simultaneously. We stood anxiously watching the target, and in an instant there was the same concussion of the deck, the same 'jumpy' feeling all over us, and away went the two shot racing with each other, striking the water, and sending up their splendid fountains, and one shot curving round to the right, the other to the left.

There is a peculiarity about these elongated rifled shot, that on striking the water, they usually diverge to the right, and finally drop considerably out of the line of fire. With spherical shot, this was not so much the case, especially in a calm sea, the ricochet being more direct, and the shot performing on the water some dozen hops before it sunk. During the whole of the practice in the *Devastation*, we never saw more than three ricochets of the shot.

After the men's dinner, the target, which had been picked up, was again lowered overboard in readiness for the electric firing, which was to be continued. During these preparations, we have time to pay a visit to the engine-room, which we find tolerably cool and well ventilated; the engine, again, is unlike the engines one usually sees on board ship, and moves in strange oscillations and curves. We pass on through masses of moving machinery, where we occasionally encounter cool blasts of air from apertures connected by pipes with revolving fans above, till we come to a dark street of some forty feet long, on either side of which, instead of shop windows, there are furnaces, each tearing away at its ration of coal, and giving out its heat and flame with a rapacity engendered by the tremendous blast rushing through it.

Here we are in the domain of the engineer, the great presiding genius of the ship. Without the engineer and his assistants, the *Devastation* becomes the veriest hulk in the navy: she cannot sail, for she has but one mast, and no yards or sails, and is, therefore, dependent alone on steam. She can, however, rush through the water with tremendous velocity, and even on our quiet journey for practice, she moved at above eleven knots per hour, her engines giving fifty-seven revolutions per minute.

Such a ship as the *Devastation* requires as many as seventy stokers, and uses about twenty-four tons of coals per day for a quiet day's work. If working up to full power all day, she consumes one hundred and fifty tons of coal per day, and she can work up to five thousand five hundred horsepower.

During our visit to the lower regions, a shot is fired from one of the turrets, and makes scarcely any report in the engine-room; there is a slight jarring felt as the gun is discharged, but not sufficient to indicate that one hundred and ten pounds of powder have been discharged. On ascending once more to the upper deck, we find preparations

are being made for a simultaneous broadside, to be fired by electricity. The shot from the four guns can be concentrated on a very small space, and can be sent instantaneously on their message of destruction. A ton and a quarter of iron can be thrown in one broadside, and we believe that there is no ship now afloat that could withstand this shock; so that the *Devastation* may be considered most appropriately christened.

Everything being ready both in the fore and after turret, as we are assured by the report of the officer in the rat-trap, we wait for the touch of the finger which will discharge the four monster guns at the same instant. Down goes the finger of the captain, and off go the four guns at the same instant. We are enveloped in smoke, which again prevents us seeing the shot pass the target; but there is a fresh breeze blowing, and the smoke clearing away rapidly, we see on the water the marks of the four shot, and, in the far distance, the descending spray of the last jet of water, that rose majestically in the air as the heavy missiles bounded on their way. One more round, and the day's firing is over, and this round is to be a trial of grape. The gun is loaded, round spins the turret, and bang goes the iron hail, cutting the water into foam, and making the target shake and collapse. Had a boat been where the target was located, she would have been cut to pieces. 'Cease firing' is now sounded, and we look round the turrets, and examine the guns, to see how they look after their performances. Already the marine artillerymen and sailors are carefully sponging and washing out the guns; whilst inside the turrets, experiments are being made to test the working efficiency of certain hydraulic arrangements for hoisting and lowering the guns in their carriages.

We note throughout two most important facts—first, that every officer seems thoroughly well acquainted with every detail of his duty. There is a quiet decision about the words of command, and an absence of all excitement and hurry, that speak to the experienced as indicative of efficiency. Each officer has his station and his special work, and there we see him doing it well and rapidly. Among the men there is a display of willingness to work, an eagerness to use their utmost exertion, and a readiness to come to the front, which shews their heart is in the work. There seem to be no skulkers on board the *Devastation*.

We were not many yards from this monster vessel when she fired her guns, and struck with her pebble powder a yacht, during the visit of the Shah to the fleet at Spithead; and we had heard that it was only when firing blank cartridges that the unexploded powder thus acted like grape; so we examined the *Devastation's* decks in front of her guns to discover marks of the powder that had struck her. There was no doubt about the result; some two or three dozen marks on the deck shewed plainly that some missile had impinged on the deck, and had left its rasping mark. Powder alone could have done this.

In less than an hour from ceasing practice, the *Devastation* is again at anchor at Spithead, and lying quietly near her old anchorage; whilst we make the best of our way on shore, and ponder over what we have seen, and what yet remains to be proved in connection with this strange monster. She can steam; she can fire; and all works well; the effect produced by her as a ram has yet to be

discovered ; and what she will do in a heavy sea, is also a problem for the future ; as a coast defence, she is almost perfect ; but whether, in a heavy sea, she could fight her turret guns, is a question which is one for proof. Any way, she is a wonderful vessel, ably commanded, admirably officered, and most efficiently manned.

A MARVELLOUS ESCAPE

ABOUT ten years ago, I was employed as night-watchman in a sugar-refinery in Greenock, a town where there are probably more sugar-refineries than in any other in Britain. That in which I was engaged was the largest in the place, and on account of its size there was another watchman besides myself. His name was Blackwood ; he was a widower ; and his only son, a boy of about twelve, used often to come and sleep in the little room where we kept watch. There was a large Newfoundland dog that was let loose at night, and used to walk all over the refinery, and was worth half-a-dozen watchmen. Our principal duties, of course, were to guard against thieves and fire. We went there at eight o'clock at night, and staid till six in the morning, at which hour the men came to their work. The little room where we sat was made especially for the watchmen. There was a fireplace in it, though there was never any need of a fire, for the sugar-house was always so hot that any additional heat was unnecessary. Except two hard wooden benches, and a shelf in the wall for a lamp, the room had no furniture. There was no inducement for the watchers to go to sleep there. Blackwood's boy, when he came for the night, used to lie on some sacks and his father's greatcoat, in a corner. Blackwood and I took in some cheap periodicals, and we used to read out these, or a newspaper, in turn, till two or three o'clock, and then we dozed, till it was time for us to go. All our sleep had to be taken during the day. There were cheap trips on the Clyde in those days, as there are still, on Saturdays. Blackwood had promised to take his son a sail, and asked me one day if I would accompany them. I did so ; and we went to Loch Lomond, and spent a very pleasant day, and returned just in time to go to the sugar-house. It was hot weather at the time, and having done without our usual sleep, we felt very tired. The heat of the sugar-house was not calculated to refresh us, and we could hardly keep our eyes open. We tried reading, as usual, but it was useless. Before ten o'clock, Blackwood had fallen sound asleep. I determined to keep awake, and intended, after a couple of hours or so, to rouse my companion, and take a sleep myself, for I felt it would be impossible to keep watch all night. I must, however, have fallen asleep unconsciously, and have remained so for several hours. I dreamt that I was in the cabin of the steamer in which I had been that day, and that it was full of smoke, and that I was being suffocated, and could not get out. I awoke as if I were struggling for life, and found the room filled with a stifling vapour, and felt an intense heat, and I heard without the crackling of flames. The sugar-house was on fire.

Blackwood was still asleep, and I knocked him up, and opened the door of the room. A cargo of raw sugar and molasses had just been taken in, and this was piled up on each side of the vaulted

passage that led from the main door of the refinery. This mass was on fire, and was sending out dense volumes of smoke ; on the other side of us were wooden stairs, which led to various parts of the building, and these were also in flames. The refinery had evidently been on fire for a long time, and we could hear the shouts of the people without. We were surrounded by the flames, and the heat was so great, that it was certain we could not survive long. Blackwood and I looked at each other in dismay. His boy appeared to be calmer than either of us, and suddenly cried out : ' Father, the beer-cellar ! '

The men who worked in the refinery, on account of the great heat to which they were subjected, had a daily allowance of beer, which was kept in a stone cellar about twelve or fourteen feet underground. It was to this place the boy referred. The top of the stone stair which led to it was surrounded by fire, but we at once rushed to it, and descended the steps. In passing the flames at the top of the stair, my face was scorched, and my hair singed. The door of the cellar was locked, but with the strength of desperation, we dashed ourselves against it, and burst it open. How cool it felt, after the fearful heat of the furnace we had just left ! But how long would it remain so, was the question that Blackwood and I considered in a few hurried words. We had hardly closed the door when we heard the frightful crash of the falling roof of the refinery, and pieces of burnt wood came hissing and crackling down the stair. We rolled two barrels behind the door, which we did not fear would catch fire, as it was covered with iron, and then we waited, while it began to grow hotter and hotter. It was quite dark there, although we were so close to the bright flames. I could hear Blackwood praying as he knelt on the floor of the cellar. He was a good man, I believe, and well prepared for the death that met him that night. I soon felt the choking stench of burnt sugar, and on putting my hand to the floor, I was burnt severely. The melted sugar and scalding molasses were flowing down the stair, and filling the place where we were. The floor sloped considerably, and I retreated to the end farthest from the door. The heat was growing intense, and the vapour was stifling. I became unconscious, and how long I remained so I cannot tell. When I recovered my senses, the heat had not gone, and there was about six inches of water in the place where I was lying. This had come from the fire-engines, and was lukewarm. I could not feel this with my hands, as they and my face were fearfully scorched, but I did so with my tongue. I had called on Blackwood, but there was no answer ; and by wriggling over with great pain for a few yards, I found both he and his son lying dead. The scalding sugar had reached the place where they were, and had apparently stopped there. I could feel the hardened cake under the water. I conjectured that they, like myself, had become unconscious, and had been burnt to death by the boiling sugar. In the agony I was enduring, I envied them. Death had no alarms for me then.

The time during which I remained in this place seemed like weeks. I had no hope of escape, as I knew that above, there must be an immense mass, formed by the parts of the building which had fallen.

I had not strength even to reach the door. At last, when my pain had decreased a little, I fell asleep, or fainting, I cannot tell which; but when I awoke I felt somewhat relieved, and a longing for life. I also for the first time felt hungry. I managed to get some beer, which revived me considerably. I tried to open the door, but was unable. The silence which pervaded the place, and the consciousness of the presence of the two dead bodies, had their effect on my weak state, and I knew I was becoming delirious. I remember I laughed hysterically, and began to shout. When I stopped, I heard a faint sound far above me: this made me perfectly wild. There was a hammer, which my hand had accidentally come against, and I took it, and began beating an empty barrel in frenzy. Then I heard a shout from above, but I was mad now; and I remember, as if it were yesterday, that I attempted to strike my head with the hammer, and then I lost all recollection. When I regained my consciousness, I found I was in the infirmary. They told me, that when the men were clearing away the rubbish, they heard a sound, and remembering the cellar, had dug down to it. They thought at first that we were all dead; and it was not till a medical man had seen the bodies, that it was discovered that there was still some life left in me.

I lay there for months, and was never expected to recover. A young and strong constitution, however, served me in good stead; and I was at last able to fill a very good situation, which the owners of the refinery kindly procured for me in England. Ten years have passed since then, and I am glad to say very few effects have remained of that terrible experience.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

WHEN Professor Tyndall goes away to the mountains, it is a sign that the holiday season is not far off. This year, he has gone earlier than usual, in order that, in the quiet of some Alpine height, he may prepare the address which he will have to deliver to the British Association meeting at Belfast in August next. Meanwhile, his paper on the Transmission of Sound will be published in the *Philosophical Transactions*, and all who take an interest in the subject, will have opportunity to discuss it, and test its conclusions at pleasure. In another paper, the learned professor gave an account to the Royal Society of experiments with a fireman's respirator. We mentioned, some time ago, that Dr Tyndall had invented a respirator to be used among smoke; but experience proved, that though cotton-wool would keep out the material particles of the smoke, it would not keep out the suffocating gases. This difficulty has now been overcome, by combining with the wool a respirator of the kind invented by Dr Stenhouse, which, being charged with animal charcoal, effectually neutralises the noxious gases. With one of these combined respirators fitted to a fireman's mask, Dr Tyndall remained for a quarter of an hour in an atmosphere of dense smoke unharmed. In most instances, fifteen minutes would more than suffice

for the rescue of persons or property from a burning house; hence, we may conclude that the new mask and respirator are quite successful.

In the canton of Graubünden, Switzerland, is an elevated valley, known as the Prättigau; it is cool and windy during the summer, but undergoes a remarkable change in winter. It is usually thickly covered with snow by the end of November; the sky becomes then almost uninterruptedly free from clouds, the air is still, the sun is bright and warm, but not so warm as to melt the snow, and thus there are no currents of heated air to disturb the general calm that prevails in the atmosphere. These peculiarities led a few enterprising invalids to choose Davos, a village in the valley, as a winter residence; and though the whole country was white with snow, they found agreeable warmth and pure air, for Davos is five thousand feet above the sea—nearly as high as the Righi. These facts became known; and last winter more than three hundred patients resorted to the valley, all more or less affected with disease of the lungs. It is obvious that a sanitarium such as here described offers peculiar advantages to weakly persons, for during the winter months they may sit or stroll out of doors without suffering from cold. The air is so still, that the sun's rays, direct and reflected, shed their revivifying influence undisturbed. But in quick walking or sledge-driving, thick coats and wrappers are needed, for then a current is set up by the motion; thus, a patient may be warm, cool, or cold at pleasure, and breathe all the time a light pure air, far above the dust-and-smoke-infested atmosphere of the low countries. Dr Frankland, F.R.S. sojourned at Davos last winter, and has published his experiences and observations of temperature in the *Proceedings* of the Royal Society.

Not only in diseases of the chest is elevation beneficial. In a Report on Yellow Fever, recently published in the United States, it is shewn that yellow fever has never appeared in any climate at the height of two thousand five hundred feet. In the island of Dominica, a hill-top not more than fifteen hundred feet high is always healthy, even when the fever is epidemic at its base. In San Domingo, similar observations have been made. The highest elevation at which yellow fever has occurred in the United States is four hundred and sixty feet, in Arkansas; and the medical men of that country now hold that the stratum of air infected by the poison is heavier than pure air, and therefore sinks, and they recommend that in unhealthy districts, houses and hospitals should be built on tall piles, so as to be above the fever stratum. But where hills are near, the best remedy will be to carry the patients up to a height of five hundred feet.

That serum and albumen coagulate when left undisturbed, is a well-known fact. In a communication recently made to the Academy of Sciences at Paris, the authors shew that the tendency to coagulate depends on the presence of carbonic acid in the two substances, and that if this gas be completely removed by proper pneumatic apparatus, neither the serum nor the albumen will coagulate, even at the boiling temperature. This is an important fact, and the

more so, as it has two aspects, for we are further informed, that the tendency to coagulate in the two fluids may be recovered by restoring to them the carbonic acid gas of which they had been deprived. Is it not possible that an albuminous fluid, coagulable at pleasure, may be found useful in the arts?

Dr Seguin of New York recommends the adoption of Family Thermometry, by which he means that mothers should learn how to use a thermometer in ascertaining the temperature of the body in children. The temperature in health being known, any departure from that amount would indicate symptoms which would be of value in considering the nature of the disturbance and means of cure. He shows, also, that by knowing how to use a thermometer, many a woman would be saved from anxiety.

The Institution of Mechanical Engineers at one of their recent meetings discussed a subject which has been mentioned in these pages—the Sand-blast, and its applications, especially in the cutting of stone. From the paper read at that meeting, we learn that this invention is likely to prove much more important as a mechanical appliance than could have been imagined. Common quartz sand, driven with a sufficiently high velocity, will cut wood, slate, marble, glass, iron, and the hardest steel: indeed, there scarcely seems to be a limit to its power. Corundum, even, can be cut by quartz sand; and quartz can be cut by a jet of small lead shot, or globules of cast-iron. Steam or compressed air can be used for the blast, and if the steam is at a pressure of four hundred pounds to the square inch or more, it will do more and better work than at a lower pressure. The force of the stream may be judged of from the fact, that a dull red light is seen around the spot where the sand strikes the stone. In finishing the surface of dressed stone, or in cleaning down a house-front, in smoothing metallic surfaces, removing rust, and especially in hollows, bends, and other irregularities, the sand-blast will prove singularly serviceable. It can also be used for boring deep holes in stone, or other hard substances. In the engraving or grinding of glass or porcelain, the air-blast is better than steam, as it does not wet the surface.

In hydraulic mining, a jet of water can be employed charged with pebbles or stones, and the penetrating and dislocating effect of the combined fluid and solid is surprising. This would be useful in tunnelling, and obviate the risk of explosions, and the disturbance of superincumbent rock.

The 'prismoidal railway,' which means a railway with one rail only, has been described in a paper read before the Franklin Institute of Philadelphia, and the inventor, Mr Crew, claims for it that it admits of a greater speed of travel than has hitherto been considered possible. The rail is a continuous beam of wood from one to two feet wide; its upper side shaped like an inverted A, but much flattened. The small, solid wheels of the car, placed at an angle, rest one on each slope of the rail, and are kept in place by other wheels with which they are connected, and thus the car moves swiftly on with but little noise or oscillation. The rail may either be laid on the ground, or fixed on piers or trestles at an elevation; and if curves are required, they can be safely constructed as sharp as the usual curves at the corners of the

streets. The locomotive is placed within a car, where it cannot be seen from the outside, neither will steam be visible, nor sparks, and there will be no noise to frighten horses. These conclusions have been verified by running a train a few hundred miles on an experimental prismoid with satisfaction to all concerned; and Mr Crew believes that it will be practicable to attain a speed of one hundred miles an hour, and thus travel from New York to Philadelphia in ninety minutes.

The prizes offered by the Royal Agricultural Society for proficiency in certain scientific subjects have not been taken. The young men who were examined in chemistry, in natural philosophy, in mechanics, in mensuration, and land-surveying, in geology, botany, and physiology, all failed. In practical agriculture, they were commendable, but one only obtained a prize. Earnest work, and a fair amount of intelligence, are required, before a student can attain scientific knowledge. It is now proposed that a more elementary examination shall be adopted, with a view to give another chance to the young men who really wish to become scientific agriculturists. Those who wish to succeed must be misers of their time.

The Society's annual meeting for the present year is to be held at Bedford. An improvement has been made in the steam-thrashing machine (exhibited at a former meeting) which burns straw as fuel. This machine is specially intended for use in the steppes of Russia, in the great plains of Hungary and other eastern countries where straw is over-abundant, and coal and wood are very scarce. The improved machine feeds itself, and rolls the straw spread out as a fan into the fire, where it is consumed with utmost economy of the heat. The construction is simple, an indispensable condition in an implement which will be mostly worked by ignorant and unskilled peasants. Africa, as well as Europe, is to have the benefit of its operations, for the Khedive is about to use it to thrash out the grain in his land of Egypt.

The state geologist of Mississippi, Mr Hilgard, has been engaged in analyses of the soils and sub-soils of that state, in which facts interesting to geologists in other countries have been brought to light. Of the soil of the cotton uplands of Western Mississippi and Tennessee, he reports that it has so 'distressing' a tendency to be washed away, that the 'effects of denudation are obvious even to the passer-by, are difficult to check, and are fast assuming the proportions of a public calamity.' Another soil, bad for cultivation, but good for pottery, is known locally as 'hog-wallows,' because when rained on after a drought, it swells and bulges so strangely as to have the appearance of having been resorted to by a herd of grunTERS.

In the widespread and calamitous floods which have taken place this year along the shores of the Mississippi, we have once more an evidence that geological convulsions are not exclusively things of the past. The great river has swept away all obstacles, and, as is said, is now with furious stream cutting a new channel to the sea. The present mouth has long been in a condition unfavourable for navigation. If a new mouth could be formed in deep water, the calamity would be attended by at least one advantage.

The geologists of France and Switzerland came to the conclusion some time ago, that the study of geological phenomena would be facilitated if an

accurate map of the position of all the erratic boulders in the two countries could be laid down. These boulders, as many readers know, indicate to the present generation the line of direction taken by great ice-streams, or other tremendous movements, in the early ages of the world; and it is important that this record should not be lost. At the last meeting of the British Association, therefore, a committee was appointed to make the facts known, and collect information; and this they are now doing by means of printed circulars widely distributed. The informant is requested to define the locality of any single boulder (or group of boulders), its size, its quality, its general appearance, its elevation above the sea; and to furnish other particulars according to circumstances. One object of this proceeding is, of course, the preservation of these ancient relics, and to insure that they shall not be removed from the sites on which Nature deposited them. The Association is to meet again next August, when an interesting report of progress may be expected; meanwhile, any one who has trustworthy particulars about boulders to communicate, would do well to send them to the secretary.

The inner bark of coniferous trees yields a substance which chemists name *coniferine*. Experiments on this substance, recently made in Dr Hofmann's laboratory, Berlin, prove that it contains sugar and a crystalline substance identical with that which constitutes the peculiar aroma of vanilla. Henceforth, therefore, vanilla will be extracted from fir-trees, and the supply will be great.

In a paper on *Peat Fuels and their Economic Values*, read at the Manchester Geological Society, it was stated that in Great Britain and Ireland there are six million acres of peat, and that each acre contains on the average twelve thousand tons of peat. Hence, in these deposits there are supplies of fuel which may some day supplement our supplies of coal. But competent geologists now tell us that the exhaustion of our coal is still a long way off, and they point to coal-fields into which the pick has not yet been driven. One of these extends from Morpeth to the Tees, and three miles under the North Sea; another borders on the coal-field of Nottinghamshire; and another occupies the country from Gloucestershire into South Wales. In the Nottinghamshire field, borings and excavations are going on which confirm the geologists' predictions, and ere long, on a line of country between Nottingham and Doncaster, collieries will be at work estimated to produce a thousand tons a day. Besides all this, there is the deep coal-field below the 'old red,' four thousand feet beneath the surface: too deep to be worked, as was thought. But there are collieries at Charleroi in Belgium, in which coal is worked without any extraordinary difficulty, at a depth of nearly four thousand feet. These are comforting facts for the people who believe that the 'supremacy' of England consists in a monopoly of trade; and we are assured that if machinery be used instead of hand-labour in excavating the coal, the saving in wages and by avoidance of waste will amount to six million pounds sterling a year. Lastly, here is another economy: Birmingham, condemned, by the opposition of a landed proprietor, to consume its own sewage, has invented a way of converting the filthy sludge into good fuel,

which can be sold at a reasonable rate. General Scott converts sewage into cement; so may we not consider that the sewage question is now settled?

SELF-AMPUTATION OF AN ARM.

A short time ago, at a Medical Temperance Meeting in London, Dr George Lamb, in the course of a speech, mentioned the following curious incident in hospital practice: 'You have not long to be dresser or house-surgeon in any hospital before you become practically acquainted with some of the results of drinking upon the persons of the patients who collect there. You will very soon have brought under your care broken limbs, fractured skulls, and disfigured faces. I remember, when it happened to be one of my weeks on duty as a dresser, a woman came into the casualty-ward, carrying her left hand and part of the forearm in her right hand. She had deliberately cut the flesh to the bone, and, finding she was unable to get through the bone with the carving-knife she was using, finished the business by chopping it off with a blunt axe. The jagging of the wound by this instrument prevented, in a measure, some of the bleeding that would have otherwise occurred. She was at once placed in bed, and the arm had to be amputated higher up, more in accordance with surgical art. The only explanation she could give of her conduct was, that the devil was on her clock, and had told her to do it. I need scarcely tell you the devil, in this case, as in many others, had entered in the form of strong drink.'

THE RUINED CHAPEL.

Unroofed, below the mountain stands
The shrine within the pine-trees' shade;
From memory, as from sight, the hands
Have passed its crumbling walls that made.
There rose the tower; o'er hill and glen,
What time last rang its peal of bells,
If hushed for aye, by wrath of men,
Or storm, or time, no record tells.
The priest is gone; now Solitude
To lead the soul above is thore;
The murr'ring Silence of the wood
Now seems to make responsive prayer.
The winds, pure acolytes unseen,
Swing to and fro the dark pine's head,
And from the mighty censer green
An incense aromatic shed.
And there, in man's forgetfulness,
For ruin's havoc to atone,
With eglantine and ivied tress,
Her graceful work has Nature shewn.
Deserted shrine! how many a heart
Has been, as those in agos past,
Beloved, revered, that, as thou art,
From man's esteem and love is cast—
Yet still, as on thy form defaced
The verdure's cheering tints arise,
In each there blooms, though wrecked, debased,
Some growth of good for men to prize.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH. Also sold by all Booksellers.